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A MODERN TELEMACHUS

BY

CHARLOTTE M. YONGE

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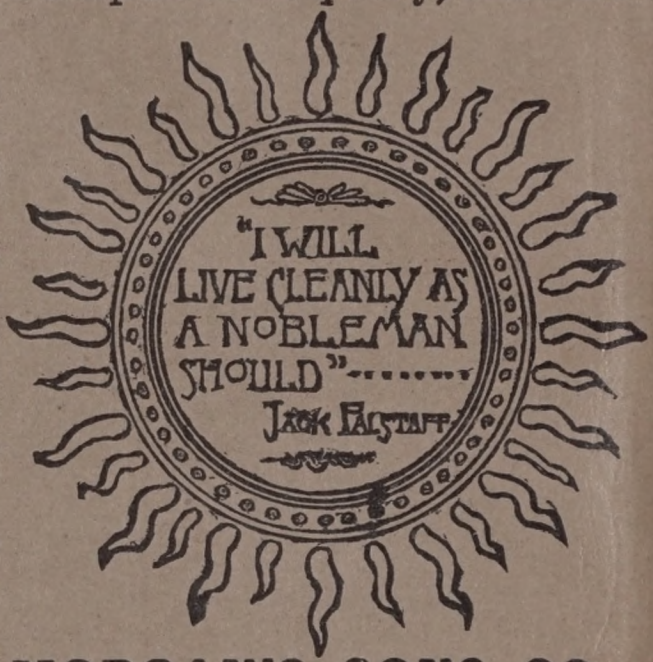

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PREFACE.

THE idea of this tale was taken from "The Mariners' Chronicle," compiled by a person named Scott early in the last century—a curious book of narratives of maritime adventures, with exceedingly quaint illustrations. Nothing has ever shown me more plainly that truth is stranger than fiction, for all that is most improbable here is the actual fact.

The Comte de Bourke was really an Irish Jacobite naturalized in France, and married to the daughter of the Marquis de Varennes, as well as in high favor with the Marshal Duke of Berwick.

In 1719, just when the ambition of Elizabeth Farnese, the second wife of Philip V. of Spain, had involved that country in a war with England, France, and Austria, the count was transferred from the Spanish embassy to that of Sweden, and sent for his wife and two elder children to join him at a Spanish port.

This arrangement was so strange that I can only account for it by supposing that as this was the date of a feeble Spanish attempt on behalf of the Jacobites in Scotland, Comte de Bourke may not have ventured by the direct route. Or, it may not have been etiquette for him to re-enter France when appointed embassador. At any rate, the poor countess did take this route to the south, and I am inclined to think the narrative must be correct, as all the sidelights I have been able to gain perfectly agree with it, often in an unexpected manner.

The suit and the baggage were just as related in the story—the only liberty I have taken being the bestowal of names. "Monsieur Arture" was really of the party, but I have made him Scotch instead of Irish, and I have no knowledge that the lackey was not French. The imbecility

of the abbe is merely a deduction from his helplessness, but of course this may have been caused by illness.

The meeting with Monsieur de Varennes at Avignon, Berwick's offer of an escort, and the countess' dread of the Pyrenees are all facts, as well as her embarkation in the Genoese tartan bound for Barcelona, and its capture by the Algerine corsair commanded by a Dutch renegade, who treated her well, and to whom she gave her watch.

Algerine history confirms what is said of his treatment. Louis XIV. had bombarded the pirate city, and compelled the dey to receive a consul and to liberate French prisoners and French property; but the lady having been taken in an Italian ship, the Dutchman was afraid to set her ashore without first taking her to Algiers, lest he should fall under suspicion. He would not venture on taking so many women on board his own vessel, being evidently afraid of his crew of more than two hundred Turks and Moors, but sent seven men on board the prize and took it in tow.

Curiously enough, history mentions the very tempest which drove the tartan apart from her captor, for it also shattered the French transports and interfered with Berwick's Spanish campaign.

The circumstances of the wreck have been closely followed. "Monsieur Arture" actually saved Mademoiselle de Bourke, and placed her in the arms of the *maitre d'hotel*, who had reached a rock, together with the abbe, the lackey, and one out of the four maids. The other three were all in the cabin with their mistress and her son, and shared their fate.

The real "Arture" tried to swim to the shore, but never was seen again, so that his adventures with the little boy are wholly imaginary. But the little girl's conduct is perfectly true. When in the steward's arms she declared that the savages might take her life, but never should make her deny her faith.

The account of these captors was a great difficulty, till in the old "Universal History" I found a description of Algeria which tallied wonderfully with the narrative. It was taken from a survey of the coast made a few years later by English officials.

The tribe inhabiting Mounts Araz and Couco, and bordering on Djigheli Bay, were really wild Arabs, claiming high descent, but very loose Mohammedans, and savage in their habits. Their name of Cabeleyzes is said—with what truth I know not—to mean "revolted," and they held themselves independent of the dey. They were in the habit of murdering or enslaving all shipwrecked travelers, except subjects of Algiers, whom they released with nothing but their lives.

All this perfectly explains the sufferings of Mademoiselle de Bourke. The history of the plundering, the threats, the savage treatment of the corpses, the wild dogs, the councils of the tribe, the separation of the captives, and the child's heroism, is all literally true—the expedient of Victorine's defense alone being an invention. It is also true that the little girl and the *maître d'hotel* wrote four letters, and sent them by different chances to Algiers, but only the last ever arrived, and it created a great sensation.

Monsieur Dessault is a real personage, and the kindness of the dey and of the Moors was exactly as related, also the expedient of sending the Marabout of Bugia to negotiate.

Mr. Thomas Thompson was really the English consul at the time, but his share in the matter is imaginary, as it depends on Arthur's adventures.

The account of the Marabout system comes from the "Universal History," but the arrival, the negotiations, and the desire of the sheik to detain the young French lady for a wife to his son, are from the narrative. He really did claim to be an equal match for her, were she daughter of the King of France, since he was King of the Mountains.

The welcome at Algiers and the *Te Deum* in the consul's chapel also are related in the book that serves me for authority. It adds that Mademoiselle de Bourke finally married a Marquis de B——, and lived much respected in Provence, dying shortly before the Revolution.

I will only mention further that a rescued Abyssinian slave named Fareek (happily not tongueless) was well known to me many years ago in the household of the late Warden Barter of Winchester College.

Since writing the above I have by the kindness of friends been enabled to discover Mr. Scott's authority, namely, a book entitled "Voyage pour la Redemption des Captifs aux Royaumes d'Alger et de Tunis, fait en 1720 par les P. P. Francois Comelin, Philemon de la Motte, et Joseph Bernard, de l'Ordre de la Sainte Trinite, dit Mathurine." This order was established by Jean Matha for the ransom and rescue of prisoners in the hands of the Moors. A translation of the adventures of the Comtesse de Bourke and her daughter was published in the *Catholic World*, New York, July, 1881. It exactly agrees with the narration in "The Mariners' Chronicle" except that, in the true spirit of the eighteenth century, Mr. Scott thought fit to suppress that these ecclesiastics were at Algiers at the time of the arrival of Mademoiselle de Bourke's letter, that they interested themselves actively on her behalf, and that they wrote the narrative from the lips of the *maître d'hotel* (who indeed may clearly be traced throughout). It

seems also that the gold cups were chalices, and that a complete set of altar equipments fell a prey to the Cabeleyzes, whose name the good fathers endeavor to connect with *Cabale*—with about as much reason as if we endeavored to derive that word from the ministry of Charles II.

Had I known in time of the assistance of these benevolent brethren I would certainly have introduced them with all due honor, but, like the Abbe Vertot, I have to say, *Mon histoire est ecrite*, and what is worse—printed. Moreover, they do not seem to have gone on the mission with the Marabout from Bugia, so that their presence really only accounts for the *Te Deum* with which the redeemed captives were welcomed.

It does not seem quite certain whether Monsieur Dessault was consul or envoy; I incline to think the latter. The translation in the *Catholic World* speaks of Sir Arthur, but Mr. Scott's "Monsieur Arture" is much more *vraisemblable*. He probably had either a surname to be concealed or else unpronounceable to French lips. Scott must have had some further information of the after history of Mademoiselle de Bourke, since he mentions her marriage, which could hardly have taken place when Pere Comelin's book was published in 1720.

C. M. YONGE.

———o———

CHAPTER I.

COMPANIONS OF THE VOYAGE.

"Make mention thereto
Touching much-loved father's safe return,
If of his whereabout I may best hear."
Odyssey (Musgrave).

"OH! brother, I wish they had named you Telemaque, and then it would have been all right!"

"Why so, sister? Why should I be called by so ugly a name? I like Ulysses much better; and it is also the name of my papa."

"That is the very thing. His name is Ulysses, and we are going to seek for him."

"Oh! I hope that cruel old Mentor is not coming to tumble us down over a great rock, like Telemaque in the picture."

"You mean Pere le Brun?"

"Yes; you know he always says he is our Mentor. And I wish he would change into a goddess with a helmet and a shield, with an ugly face, and go off in a cloud. Do you think he will, Estelle?"

"Do not be so silly, Ulick; there are no goddesses now."

"I heard Monsier de la Mede tell that pretty lady with the diamond butterfly that she was his goddess; so there are!"

"You do not understand, brother. That was only flattery and compliment. Goddesses were only in the Greek mythology, and were all over long ago!"

"But are we really going to see our papa?"

"Oh, yes, mamma told me so. He is made embassador to Sweden, you know."

"Is that greater than envoy to Spain?"

"Very, very much greater. They call mamma Madame l'Embassadrice; and she is having three complete new dresses made. See, there are *la bonne* and Laurent talking. It is English, and if we go near with our cups and balls we shall hear all about it. Laurent always knows, because my uncle tells him."

"You must call him 'La Jeunesse' now he is made mamma's lackey. Is he not beautiful in his new livery?"

"Be still now, brother; I want to hear what they are saying."

This may sound somewhat sly, but French children, before Rousseau had made them the fashion, were kept in the background, and were reduced to picking up intelligence as best they could, without any sense of its being dishonorable to do so; and, indeed, it was more neglect than desire of concealment that left them uninformed.

This was in 1719, four years after the accession of Louis XV., a puny infant, to the French throne, and in the midst of the regency of the Duke of Orleans. The scene was a broad walk in the Tuileries gardens, beneath a closely-clipped wall of greenery, along which were disposed alternately busts upon pedestals and stone vases of flowers, while beyond lay formal beds of flowers, the gravel walks between radiating from a fountain, at present quiescent, for it was only ten o'clock in the forenoon, and the gardens were chiefly frequented at that hour by children and their attendants, who, like Estelle and Ulysse de Bourke, were taking an early walk on their way home from mass.

They were a miniature lady and gentleman of the period in costume, with the single exception that, in consideration of their being only nine and seven years old, their hair was free from powder. Estelle's light, almost flaxen locks were brushed back from her forehead, and tied behind with a rose-colored ribbon, but uncovered, except by a tiny lace cap on the crown of her head; Ulick's darker hair was carefully arranged in great curls on his back and shoulders, as like a full-bottomed wig as nature would per-

mit, and over it he wore a little cocked-hat edged with gold lace. He had a rich laced cravat, a double-breasted waistcoat of pale-blue satin, and breeches to match, a brown velvet coat with blue embroidery on the pockets, collar, and skirts, silk stockings to match, as well as the knot of the tiny scabbard of the semblance of a sword at his side, shoes with silver buckles, and altogether he might have been a full-grown comte or vicomte seen through a diminishing glass. His sister was in full-hooded dress, with tight long waist, and sleeves reaching to her elbows, the under skirt a pale pink, the upper a deeper rose-color; but stiff as was the attire, she had managed to give it a slight general air of disarrangement, to get her cap a little on one side, a stray curl loose on her forehead, to tear a bit of the dangling lace on her arms, and to splash her robe with a puddle. He was in air, feature, and complexion a perfect little dark Frenchman.

The contour of her face, still more its rosy glow, were more in accordance with her surname, and so especially were the large, deep-blue eyes with the long dark lashes and penciled brows. And there was a lively, restless air about her, full of intelligence, as she maneuvered her brother toward a stone seat, guarded by a couple of cupids reining in sleepy-looking lions in stone, where, under the shade of a lime-tree, her little petticoated brother of two years old was asleep, cradled in the lap of a large, portly, handsome woman, in a dark dress, a white cap and apron, and dark crimson cloak, loosely put back, as it was an August day. Native costumes were then, as now, always worn by French nurses; but this was not the garb of any province of the kingdom, and was as Irish as the brogue in which she was conversing with the tall, fine young man who stood at ease beside her. He was in a magnificent green-and-gold livery suit, his hair powdered, and fastened in a queue, the whiteness contrasting with the dark brows, and the eyes and complexion of that fine Irish type that it is the fashion to call Milesian. He looked proud of his dress, which was viewed in those days as eminently becoming, and did, in fact, display his well-made figure and limbs to great advantage; but he looked anxiously about, and his first inquiry on coming on the scene in attendance upon the little boy had been:

"The top of the morning to ye, mother? And where is Victorine?"

"Arrah, and what would ye want with Victorine?" demanded the *bonne*. "Is not the old mother enough for one while, to feast her eyes on her an' Lanty Callaghan, now he has shed the *marmiton's* slough, and come out in old

Ireland's colors, like a butterfly from a palmer? La Jeunesse, instead of Laurent here and Laurent there."

La Pierre and La Jeunnesse were the stereotyped names of all pairs of lackeys in French noble houses, and the title was a mark of promotion; but Lanty winced and said, "Have done with that, mother. You know that never the pot nor the kettle has blacked my fingers since Master Phelim went to the good father's school with me to carry his books and insinse him with the learning. 'Tis all one, as his own body-servant that I have been, as was fitting for his own foster-brother, till now, when not one of the servants, barring myself and Maitre Hebert, the steward, will follow Madame la Comtesse beyond the four walls of Paris. 'Will you desert us, too, Laurent?' says the lady. 'And is it me you mane, madame?' says I, 'sorrah a Callaghan ever deserted a Burke!' 'Then,' says she, 'if you will go with us to Sweden, you shall have two lackey's suits, and a couple of *louis d'or* to cross your pocket with by the year, forbye the fee and bounty of all the visitors to Monsieur le Comte.' 'Is it Monsieur l'Abbe goes with madame?' says I. 'And why not?' says she. 'Then,' says I, ''tis myself that is mightily obliged to your ladyship, and am ready to put on her colors and do all in reason in her service, so as I am free to attend to Master Phelim, that is Monsieur l'Abbe, whenever he needs me, that am in duty bound as his own foster-brother.' 'Ah, Laurent,' says she, ''tis you that are the faithful domestic. We shall all stand in need of such good offices as we can do to one another, for we shall have a long and troublesome, if not dangerous journey, both before and after we have met Monsieur le Comte.'"

Estelle here nodded her head with a certain satisfaction, while the nurse replied:

"And what other answer could the son of your father make—heavens be his bed—that was shot through the head by the masther's side in the weary wars in Spain? and whom could ye be bound to serve barring Masther Phelim, that's lain in the same cradle with yees——"

"Is not Victorine here, mother?" still restlessly demanded Lanty.

"Never you heed Victorine," replied she. "Sure she may have a little arrant of her own, and ye might have a word for the old mother that never parted with you before."

"You are not going, mother!" he exclaimed.

"'Tis my heart that will go with you and Masther Phelim, my jewel; but Madame la Comtesse will have it that this weeny little darlint"—caressing the child in her lap—"could never bear the cold of that bare and dissolute

place in the north you are bound for, and old Madame la Marquise, her mother, would be mad entirely if all the children left her; but our own lady can't quit the little one without leaving his own nurse, Honor, with him!"

"That's news to me intirely, mother," said Lanty; "bad luck to it!"

Honor laughed that half-proud, half-sad laugh of mothers when their sons outgrow them. "Fine talking! Much he cares for the old mother if he can see the young girl go with him."

For Lanty's eyes had brightened at sight of a slight little figure, trim to the last degree, with a jaunty little cap on her dark hair, gay trimmings to the black apron, dainty shoes and stockings, that came tripping down the path. His tongue instantly changed to French from what he called English, as, in pathetic, insinuating modulations, he demanded how she could be making him weary his very heart out.

"Who bade you?" she retorted. "I never asked you to waste your time here!"

"And will ye not give me a glance of the eyes that have made a cinder of my poor heart, when I am going away into the desolate North, among the bears and the savages and the heretics?"

"There will be plenty of eyes there to look at your fine green-and-gold, for the sake of the Paris cut; though a great lumbering fellow like you does not know how to show it off!"

"And if I bring back a heretic *bru* to break the heart of the mother, will it not be all the fault of the cruelty of Mademoiselle Victorine?"

Here Estelle, unable to withstand Lanty's piteous intonations, broke in, "Never mind, Laurent, Victorine goes with us. She went to be measured for a new pair of shoes on purpose!"

"Ah! I thought I should disembarrass myself of a great troublesome Irishman!"

"No," retorted the boy; "you knew Laurent was going. for Maitre Hebert had just come in to say he must have a lackey's suit!"

"Yes," said Estelle, "that was when you took me in your arms and kissed me, and said you would follow Madame la Comtesse to the end of the world."

The old nurse laughed heartily, but Victorine cried out, "Does mademoiselle think I am going to follow naughty little girls who invent follies? It is still free to me to change my mind. Poor Simon Claquette is gnawing his heart out, and he is to be left *concierge!*"

The clock at the palace chimed eleven, Estelle took her

brother's hand, Honor rose with little Jacques in her arms, Victorine paced beside her, and Lanty as La Jeunesse followed, puffing out his breast and wielding his cane, as they all went home to *dejeuner*.

Twenty-nine years before the opening of this narrative, just after the battle of Boyne Water had ruined the hopes of the Stuarts in Ireland, Sir Ulick Burke had attended James II. in his flight from Waterford; and his wife had followed him, attended by her two faithful servants, Patrick Callaghan and his wife, Honor, carrying her mistress' child on her bosom, and her own on her back.

Sir Ulick, or Le Chevalier Bourke, as the French called him, had no scruple in taking service in the armies of Louis XIV. Callaghan followed him everywhere, while Honor remained a devoted attendant on her lady, doubly bound to her by exile and sorrow.

Little Ulick Burke's foster-sister died, perhaps because she had always been made second to him through all the hardships and exposure of the journey. Other babes of both lady and nurse had succumbed to the mortality which beset the children of that generation, and the only survivors besides the eldest Burke and one daughter were the two youngest of each mother, and they had arrived so nearly at the same time that Honor Callaghan could again be foster-mother to Phelim Burke, a sickly child, reared with great difficulty.

The family were becoming almost French. Sir Ulick was an intimate friend of one of the noblest men of the day, James Fitz-James, Marshal Duke of Berwick, who united military talent, almost equal to that of his uncle of Marlborough, to an unswerving honor and integrity very rare in those evil times. Under him Sir Ulick fought in the campaigns that finally established the House of Bourbon upon the throne of Spain, and the younger Ulick, or Ulysse, as his name had been classicalized and Frenchified, was making his first campaign as a mere boy at the time of the battle of Almanza, that solitary British defeat, for which our national consolation is that the French were commanded by an Englishman, the Duke of Berwick, and the English by a Frenchman, the Huguenot Rubigne, Earl of Galway. The first English charge was, however, fatal to the Chevalier Bourke, who fell mortally wounded, and in the endeavor to carry him off the field, the faithful Callaghan likewise fell. Sir Ulick lived long enough to be visited by the duke, and to commend his children to his friend's protection.

Berwick was held to be dry and stiff, but he was a faithful friend, and well redeemed his promise. The eldest son, young as he was, obtained as wife the daughter of the

Marquise de Varennes, and soon distinguished himself both in war and policy, so as to receive the title of Comte de Bourke.

The French Church was called on to provide for the other two children. The daughter, Alice, became a nun in one of the Parisian convents, with promises of promotion. The younger son, Phelim, was weakly in health, and of intellect feeble, if not deficient, and was almost dependent on the devoted care and tenderness of his foster brother, Laurent Callaghan. Nobody was startled when Berwick's interest procured for the dull boy of ten years old the Abbey of St. Eudoce in Champagne. To be sure the responsibilities were not great, for the abbey had been burned down a century and a half ago by the Huguenots, and there had never been any monks in it since, so the only effect was that little Phelim Burke went by the imposing title of Monsieur l'Abbe de St. Eudoce, and his family enjoyed as much of the revenues of the estates of the abbey as the intendant thought proper to transmit to them. He was, to a certain degree, ecclesiastically educated, having just memory enough to retain for recitation the tasks that Lanty helped him to learn, and he could copy the themes or translations made for him by his faithful companion.

Neither boy had the least notion of unfairness or deception in this arrangement; it was only the natural service of the one to the other, and if it were perceived by the fathers of the seminary, whither Lanty daily conducted the young abbot, they winked at it. Nor, though the quick-witted Lanty thus acquired a considerable amount of learning, no idea occurred to him of availing himself of it for his own advantage. It sat outside him, as it were, for "Masther Phelim's" use; and he no more thought of applying it to his own elevation than he did of wearing the *soutane* he brushed for his young master.

The abbe was now five-and-twenty, had received the tonsure, and had been admitted to minor orders, but there was no necessity for him to proceed any further unless higher promotion should be accorded to him in recompense of his brother's services. He was a gentle, amiable being, not at all fit to take care of himself; and since the death of his mother he had been the charge of his brother and sister-in-law, or perhaps, more correctly speaking, of the Dowager Marquise de Varennes, for all the branches of the family lived together in the Hotel de Varennes at Paris, or its chateau in the country, and the fine old lady ruled over all, her son and son-in-law being often absent, as was the case at present.

A fresh Europen war had been provoked by the ambition of the second wife of Philip V. of Spain, the prince for

whose cause Berwick had fought. This queen, Elizabeth Farnese, wanted rank and dominion for her own son; moreover, Philip looked with longing eyes at his native kingdom of France, all claim to which he had resigned when Spain was bequeathed to him; but now that only a sickly child, Louis XV., stood between him and the succession in right of blood, he felt his rights superior to those of the Duke of Orleans. Thus Spain was induced to become hostile to France, and to commence the war known as that of the Quadruple Alliance.

While there was still hope of accommodation, the Comte de Bourke had been sent as a special envoy to Madrid, and there continued even after the war had broken out, and the Duke of Berwick, resigning all the estates he had received from the gratitude of Philip V., had led an army across the frontier.

The count had, however, just been appointed ambassador to Sweden, and was anxious to be joined by his family on the way thither.

The tidings had created great commotion. Madame de Varennes looked on Sweeden as an Ultima Thule of frost and snow, but knew that a lady's presence was essential to the display required of an embassador. She strove, however, to have the children left with her; but her daughter declared that she could not part with Estelle, who was already a companion and friend, and that Ulysse must be with his father, who longed for his eldest son, so that only little Jacques, a delicate child, was to be left to console his grandmother.

CHAPTER II.

A JACOBITE WAIF.

"Sae now he's o'er the floods sae gray,
And Lord Maxwell has ta'en his good-night."
Lord Maxwell's Good-night.

MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOURKE was by no means a helpless fine lady. She had several times accompanied her husband on his expeditions, and had only not gone with him to Madrid because he did not expect to be long absent, and she sorely rued the separation.

She was very busy in her own room, superintending the packing, and assisting in it, where her own clever fingers were more effective than those of her maids. She was in her *robe de chambre*, a dark-blue wrapper embroidered with white, and put on more neatly than was always the case with French ladies in *deshabille*. The hoop, long, stiff stays, rich brocade robe, and fabric of powdered hair were equally unsuitable to ease or exertion, and consequently

were seldom assumed till late in the day, when the toilet was often made in public.

So Madame de Bourke's hair was simply rolled out of her way, and she appeared in her true colors, as a little, brisk, bonny woman, with no actual beauty, but very expressive light-gray eyes, furnished with intensely long, black lashes, and a sweet, mobile, lively countenance.

Estelle was trying to amuse little Jacques, and prevent him from trotting between the boxes, putting all sorts of undesirable goods into them; and Ulysse had collected his toys, and was pleading earnestly that a headless wooden horse, and a kite twice as tall as himself, of Lanty's manufacture, might go with them.

He was told that another *cerf-volant* should be made for him at the journey's end; but was only partially consoled, and his mother was fain to compound for a box of woolly lambs. Estelle winked away a tear when her doll was rejected, a wooden, highly-painted lady, bedizened in brocade, and so dear to her soul that it was hard to be told that she was too old for such toys, and that the Swedes would be shocked to see the embassador's daughter embracing a doll. She had, however, to preserve her character of a reasonable child, and tried to derive consolation from the permission to bestow "mademoiselle" upon the *concierge's* little sick daughter, who would be sure to cherish her duly.

"But, oh, mamma, I pray you to let me take my book!"

"Assuredly, my child. Let us see! What? Telemaque? Not 'Prince Percinet and Princess Gracieuse?'"

"I am tired of them, mamma."

"Nor Madame d'Aulnoy's Fairy Tales?"

"Oh, no, thank you, mamma; I love nothing so well as Telemaque."

"Thou art a droll child," said her mother.

"Ah, but we are going to be like Telemaque."

"Heaven forefend," said the poor lady.

"Yes, dear mamma, I am glad you are going with us instead of staying at home to weave and unweave webs. If Penelope had been like *you* she would have gone!"

"Take care, is not Jacques acting Penelope?" said Madame de Bourke, unable to help smiling at her little daughter's glib mythology, while going to the rescue of the embroidery silks, in which her youngest son was entangling himself.

At that moment there was a knock at the door, and a message was brought that the Countess of Nithsdale begged the favor of a few minutes' conversation in private with madame. The Scottish title fared better on the lips

of La Jeunesse than it would have done on those of his predecessor. There was considerable intimacy among all the Jacobite exiles in and about Paris; and Winifred, Countess of Nithsdale, though living a very quiet and secluded life, was held in high estimation among all who recollected the act of wifely heroism by which she had rescued her husband from the block.

Madame de Bourke bade the maids carry off the little Jacques, and Ulysse followed; but Estelle, who had often listened with rapt attention to the story of the escape, and longed to feast her eyes on the heroine, remained in her corner, usefully employed in disentangling the embroilment of silks, and with the illustrations to her beloved Telemaque as a resource in case the conversation should be tedious. Children who have hundreds of picture-books to rustle through can little guess how their predecessors could once dream over one.

Estelle made her low reverence unnoticed, and watched with eager eyes as the slight figure entered, clad in the stately costume that was regarded as proper respect to her hostess; but the long, loose sack of blue silk was faded, the *feuille-morte* velvet petticoat frayed, the lace on the neck and sleeves washed and mended; there were no jewels on the sleeves, though the long gloves fitted exquisitely, no gems in the buckles of the high-heeled shoes, and the only ornament in the carefully rolled and powdered hair a white rose. Her face was thin and worn, with pleasant brown eyes. Estelle could not think her as beautiful as Calypso inconsolable for Ulysses, or Antiope receiving the boar's head. "I know she is better than either," thought the little maid; "but I wish she was more like Minerva."

The countesses met with the lowest of courtesies, and apologies on the one side for intrusion, on the other for *deshabille*, so they concluded with an embrace really affectionate, though consideration for powder made it necessarily somewhat theatrical in appearance.

These were the stiffest of days, just before formality had become unbearable, and the reaction of simplicity had set in; and Estelle had undone two desperate knots in the green and yellow silks before the preliminary compliments were over, and Lady Nithsdale arrived at the point.

"Madame is about to rejoin *Monsieur son Ma*[illegible]."

"I am about to have that happiness."

"That is the reason I have been bold enough to derange her."

"Do not mention it. It is always a pleasant to see Madame la Comtesse."

"Ah! what will madame say when she hears that it is to ask a great favor of her."

"Madame may reckon on me for whatever she would command."

"If you can grant it—oh! madame," cried the Scottish countess, beginning to drop her formality in her eagerness, "we shall be forever beholden to you, and you will make a wounded heart to sing, besides perhaps saving a noble young spirit."

"Madame makes me impatient to hear what she would have of me," said the French countess, becoming a little on her guard, as the wife of a diplomatist, recollecting, too, that peace with George I. might mean war with the Jacobites.

"I know not whether a young kinsman of my lord's has ever been presented to madame. His name is Arthur Maxwell Hope; but we call him usually by his Christian name."

"A tall, dark, handsome youth, almost like a Spaniard, or a picture by Vandyke? It seems to me that I have seen him with Monsieur le Comte." (Madame de Bourke could not venture on such a word as Nithsdale.)

"Madame is right. The mother of the boy is a Maxwell, a cousin not far removed from my lord, but he could not hinder her from being given in marriage as second wife to Sir David Hope, already an old man. He was good to her, but when he died the sons by the first wife were harsh and unkind to her and to her son, of whom they had always been jealous. The eldest was a creature of my Lord Stair, and altogether a Whig; indeed, he now holds an office at the court of the Elector of Hanover, and has been created one of *his* peers." (The scorn with which the gentle Winifred uttered those words was worth seeing, and the other noble lady gave a little derisive laugh.) "These half brothers declared that Lady Hope was nurturing the young Arthur in Toryism and disaffection, and they made it a plea for separating him from her, and sending him to an old minister who kept a school, and who was very severe and even cruel to the poor boy. But I am wearying madame."

"Oh, no; I listen with the deepest interest."

"Finally, when the king was expected in Scotland, and men's minds were full of anger and bitterness, as well as [illegible] spirit, the boy—he was then only fourteen years [illegible]ed of his grandfather's having fought at Kil[illegible] used language which the tutor pronounced treasonable. He was punished and confined to his room; but in the night he made his escape and joined the royal army. My husband was grieved to see him, told him he had no right to political opinions, and tried to send him home in time to make his peace before all was lost. Alas!

no. The little fellow did, indeed, pass out safely from Preston, but only to join my Lord Mar. He was among the gentlemen who embarked at Banff; and when my lord, by Heaven's mercy, had escaped from the Tower of London, and we arrived at Paris, almost the first person we saw was little Arthur, whom we thought to have been safe at home. We have kept him with us, and I contrived to let his mother know that he is living, for she had mourned him as among the slain."

"Poor mother!"

"You may well pity her, madame. She writes to me that if Arthur had returned at once from Preston, as my lord advised, all would have been passed over as a schoolboy frolic; and, indeed, he has never been attainted; but there is nothing that his eldest brother, Lord Burnside as they call him, dreads so much as that it should be known that one of his family was engaged in the campaign, or that he is keeping such ill company as we are. Therefore, at her request, we have never called him Hope, but let him go by our name of Maxwell, which is his by baptism; and now she tells me that if he could make his way to Scotland, not as if coming from Paris or Bar-le-Duc, but merely as if traveling on the Continent, his brother would consent to his return."

"Would she be willing that he should live under the usurper?"

"Madame, to tell you the truth," said Lady Nithsdale, "the Lady Hope is not one to heed the question of usurpers, so long as her son is safe and a good lad. Nay, for my part, we all lived peaceably and happily enough under Queen Anne; and, by all I hear, so they still do at home under the Elector of Hanover."

"The regent has acknowledged him," put in the French lady.

"Well," said the poor exile, "I know my lord felt that it was his duty to obey the summons of his lawful sovereign, and that, as he said when he took up arms, one can only do one's duty and take the consequences; but, oh! when I look at the misery and desolation that has come of it, when I think of the wives not so happy as I am, when I see my dear lord wearing out his life in banishment and think of our dear home and our poor people, I am tempted to wonder whether it were indeed a duty, or whether there were any right to call on brave men without more steadfast purpose not to abandon them!"

"It would have been very different if the Duke of Berwick had led the way," observed Madame de Bourke. "Then my husband would have gone, but, being French subjects, honor stayed both him and the duke as long as

the regent made no move." The good lady, of course, thought that the marshal duke and her own count must secure victory; but Lady Nithsdale was intent on her own branch of the subject, and did not pursue "what might have been."

"After all," she said, "poor Arthur, at fourteen, could have no true political convictions. He merely fled because he was harshly treated, heard his grandfather branded as a traitor, and had an enthusiasm for my husband, who had been kind to him. It was a mere boy's escapade, and if he had returned home when my lord bade him it would only have been remembered as such. He knows it now, and I frankly tell you, madame, that what he has seen of our exiled court has not increased his ardor in the cause."

"Alas, no," said Madame de Bourke. "If the Chevalier de St. George were other than he is, it would be easier to act in his behalf."

"And you agree with me, madame," continued the visitor, "that nothing can be worse or more hopeless for a youth than the life to which we are constrained here, with our whole shadow of hope in intrigue; and for our men, no occupation worthy of their sex. We women are not so ill off, with our children and domestic affairs; but it breaks my heart to see brave gentlemen's lives thus wasted. We have done our best for Arthur. He has studied with one of our good clergy, and my lord himself has taught him to fence; but we cannot treat him any longer as a boy, and I know not what is to be his future, unless we can return him to his own country."

"Our army," suggested Madame de Bourke.

"Ah! but he is Protestant."

"A heretic!" exclaimed the lady, drawing herself up. "But——"

"Oh, do not refuse me on that account. He is a good lad, and has lived enough among Catholics to keep his opinions in the background. But you understand that it is another reason for wishing to convey him, if not to Scotland, to some land like Sweden or Prussia, where his faith would not be a bar to his promotion."

"What is it you would have me do?" said Madame de Bourke more coldly.

[illegible]dame would permit him to be included in her [illegible] as about to join the embassador's suit, and thus conduct him to Sweden; Lady Hope would find means to communicate with him from thence, the poor young man would be saved from a ruined career, and the heart of the widow and mother would bless you forever."

Madame de Bourke was touched, but she was a prudent woman, and paused to ask whether the youth had shown

any tendency to run into temptation, from which Lady Nithsdale wished to remove him.

"Oh, no," she answered; "he was a perfectly good, docile lad, though high-spirited, submissive to the earl, and a kind playfellow to her little girls; it was his very excellence that made it so unfortunate that he should thus be stranded in early youth in consequence of one boyish folly."

The countess began to yield. She thought he might go as secretary to her lord, and she owned that if he was a brave young man, he would be an addition to her little escort, which only numbered two men besides her brother-in-law, the *abbe*, who was of almost as little account as his young nephew. "But I should warn you, madame," added Madame de Bourke, "that it may be a very dangerous journey. I own to you, though I would not tell my poor mother, that my heart fails me when I think of it, and were it not for the express commands of their father, I would not risk my poor children on it."

"I do not think you will find Sweden otherwise than a cheerful, pleasant abode," said Lady Nithsdale.

"Ah! if we were only in Sweden, or with my husband, all would be well!" replied the other lady; "but we have to pass through the mountains, and the Catalans are always ill-affected to us French."

"Nay; but you are a party of women, and belong to an embassador!" was the answer.

"What do those robbers care for that? We are all the better prey for them! I have heard histories of Spanish cruelty and lawlessness that would make you shudder! You cannot guess at the terrible presentiments that have haunted me ever since I had my husband's letter."

"There is danger everywhere, dear friend," said Lady Nithsdale, kindly; "but God finds a way for us through all."

"Ah! you have experienced it," said Madame de Bourke. "Let us proceed to the affairs. I only thought I should tell you the truth."

Lady Nithsdale answered for the courage of her *protege*, and it was further determined that he should be presented to her that evening by the earl, at the farewell reception which Madame de Varennes was to hold on her daughter's behalf, when it could be determined in what capacity he should be named in the passport.

Estelle, who had been listening with all her ears, and trying to find a character in Fenelon's romance to be represented by Arthur Hope, now further heard it explained that the party were to go southward to meet her father at one of the Mediterranean ports, as the English government

were so suspicious of Jacobites that he did not venture on taking the direct route by sea, but meant to travel through Germany. Madame de Bourke expected to meet her brother at Avignon, and to obtain his advice as to her further route.

Estelle heard this with great satisfaction. "We shall go to the Mediterranean Sea and be in danger," she said to herself, unfolding the map at the beginning of her Telemaque; "that is quite right! Perhaps we shall see Calypso's Island."

She begged hard to be allowed to sit up that evening to see the hero of the escape from the Tower of London, as well as the traveling companion destined for her, and she prevailed, for mamma pronounced that she had been very sage and reasonable all day, and the grandmamma, who was so soon to part with her, could refuse her nothing. So she was full dressed, with hair curled, and permitted to stand by the tall, high-backed chair where the old lady sat to receive her visitors.

The Marquise de Varennes was a small, withered woman, with keen eyes, and a sort of sparkle of manner, and power of setting people at ease, that made her the more charming the older she grew. An experienced eye could detect that she retained the costume of the prime of Louis XIV., when head-dresses were less high than that which her daughter was obliged to wear. For the last two mortal hours of that busy day had poor Madame de Bourke been compelled to sit under the hands of the hairdresser, who was building up, with paste and powder and the like, an original conception of his, namely, a Northern landscape, with snow-laden trees, drifts of snow, diamond icicles, and even a cottage beside an ice-bound stream. She could ill spare the time, and longed to be excused; but the artist had begged so hard to be allowed to carry out his brilliant and unique idea, this last time of attending on Madame l'Embassadrice, that there was no resisting him, and perhaps her strange forebodings made her less willing to inflict a disappointment on the poor man. It would have been strange to contrast the fabric of vanity building up outside her head with the melancholy bodings within it, as she sat motionless under the hairdresser's fingers; but at the end she roused herself to smile gratefully, and give the admiration that was felt to be due to the monstrosity that crowned her. Forbearance and Christian patience may be exercised even on a toilet *a la* Louis XV. Long practice enabled her to walk about, seat herself, rise and courtesy without detriment to the edifice, or bestowing the powder either on her neighbors or on the richly-flowered white brocade she wore; while she received the compli-

ments, one after another, of ladies in even more gorgeous array, and gentlemen in velvet coats, adorned with gold lace, cravats of exquisite fabric, and diamond shoe-buckles.

Phelim Burke, otherwise l'Abbe de St. Eudoce, stood near her. He was a thin, yellow, and freckled youth, with sandy hair and typical Irish features, but without their drollery, and his face was what might have been expected in a half-starved, half-clad gossoon in a cabin, rather than surmounting a silken *soutane* in a Parisian *salon;* but he had a pleasant smile when kindly addressed by his friends.

Presently Lady Nithsdale drew near, accompanied by a tall, grave gentleman, and bringing with them a still taller youth, with the stiffest of backs and the longest of legs, who, when presented, made a bow apparently from the end of his spine, like Estelle's lamented Dutch-jointed doll when made to sit down. Moreover, he was more shabbily dressed than any other gentleman present, with a general outgrown look about his coat, and darns in his silk stockings; and though they were made by the hand of a countess, that did not add to their elegance. And as he stood as stiff as a ramrod or as a sentinel, Estelle's good-breeding was all called into play, and her mother's heart quailed as she said to herself, "A great, raw Scot! What can be done with him?"

Lord Nithsdale spoke for him, thinking he had better go as secretary, and showing some handwriting of good quality. "Did he know any languages?"

"French, English, Latin, and some Greek. And, madame," added Lord Nithsdale, "not only is his French much better than mine, as you would hear if the boy durst open his mouth, but our broad Scotch is so like Swedish that he will almost be an interpreter there."

However hopeless Madame de Bourke felt, she smiled and professed herself rejoiced to hear it, and it was further decided that Arthur Maxwell Hope, aged eighteen, Scot by birth, should be mentioned among those of the embassador's household for whom she demanded passports. Her position rendered this no matter of difficulty, and it was wiser to give the full truth to the home authorities; but as it was desirable that it should not be reported to the English government that Lord Burnside's brother was in the suit of the Jacobite Comte de Bourke, he was only to be known to the public by his first name, which was not much harder to French lips than Maxwell or Hope.

"Tall and black and awkward," said Estelle, describing him to her brother. "I shall not like him—I shall call him Phalante instead of Arthur."

"Arthur," said Ulysse; "King Arthur was turned into a crow!"

"Well, this Arthur is like a crow—a great, black, skinny crow, with torn feathers."

CHAPTER III.

ON THE RHONE.

"Fairer scenes the opening eye
Of the day can scarce descry,
Fairer sight he looks not on
Than the pleasant banks of Rhone."

Archbishop Trench.

LONG legs may be in the abstract an advantage, but scarcely so in what was called in France *une grande Berline.* This was the favorite traveling-carriage of the eighteenth century, and consisted of a close carriage or coach proper, with arrangements on the top for luggage, and behind it another seat open, but provided with a large leathern hood, and in front another place for the coachman and his companions. Each seat was wide enough to hold three persons, and thus within sat Madame de Bourke, her brother-in-law, the two children, Arthur Hope, and Mademoiselle Julienne, an elderly woman of the artisan class, *femme de chambre* to the countess. Victorine, who was attendant on the children, would travel under the hood with two more maids; and the front seat would be occupied by the coachman, Laurence Callaghan—otherwise La Jeunesse—and Maitre Hebert, the *maitre d'hotel.* Fain would Arthur have shared their elevation, so far as ease and comfort of mind and body went, and the countess' wishes may have gone the same way; but besides that it would have been an insult to class him with the servants, the horses of the home establishment, driven by their own coachman, took the party the first stage out of Paris; and though afterward the post-horses or mules, six in number, would be ridden by their own postilions, there was such an amount of luggage as to leave little or no space for a third person outside.

It had been a perfect sight to see the carriage packed, when Arthur, convoyed by Lord Nithsdale, arrived in the courtyard of the Hotel de Varennes. Madame de Bourke was taking with her all the paraphernalia of an embassador—a service of plate, in a huge chest stowed under the seat, a portrait of Philip V., in a gold frame set with diamonds, being included among her jewelry—and Lord Nithsdale, standing by, could not but dryly remark: "Yonder is more than we brought with us, Arthur."

The two walked up and down the court together, unwilling to intrude on the parting which, as they well knew

would be made in floods of tears. Sad enough indeed it was, for Madame de Varennes was advanced in years, and her daughter had not only to part with her, but with the baby Jacques, for an unknown space of time; but the self-command and restraint of grief for the sake of each other was absolutely unknown. It was a point of honor and sentiment to weep as much as possible, and it would have been regarded as frigid and unnatural not to go on crying too much to eat or speak for a whole day beforehand, and at least two afterward.

So when the travelers descended the steps to take their seats, each face was enveloped in a handkerchief, and there were passionate embraces, literal pressings to the breast, and violent sobs, as each victim, one after the other, ascended the carriage steps and fell back on the seat; while in the background Honor Callaghan was uttering Irish wails over the abbe and Laurence, and the lamentable sound set the little lap-dog and the big watch-dog howling in chorus. Arthur Hope, probably as miserable as any of them in parting with his friend and hero, was only standing like a stake, and an embarrassed stake (if that be possible), and Lord Nithsdale, though anxious for him, heartily pitying all, was nevertheless haunted by a queer recollection of Lance and his dog, and thinking that French dogs were not devoid of sympathy, and that the part of Crab was left for Arthur.

However, the last embrace was given, and the ladies were all packed in, while the abbe, with his breast heaving with sobs, his big hat in one hand and a huge silk pocket-handkerchief in the other, did not forget his manners, but waved to Arthur to ascend the steps first. "Secretary, not guest. You must remember that another time," said Lord Nithsdale. "God bless you, my dear lad, and bring you safe back to bonny Scotland, a true and leal heart."

Arthur wrung his friend's hand once more, and disappeared into the vehicle: Nurse Honor made one more rush, and uttered another "Ohone" over Abbe Phelim, who followed into the carriage; the door was shut; there was a last wail over "Lanty, the sunbeam of me heart," as he climbed to the box-seat; the harness jingled; coachman and postilions cracked their whips, the impatient horses dashed out at the *porte cochere;* and Arthur, after endeavoring to dispose of his legs, looked about him and saw, opposite to him, Madame de Bourke lying back in the corner in a transport of grief, one arm round her daughter, and her little son lying across her lap, both sobbing and crying; and on one side of them the abbe, sunk in his corner, his yellow silk handkerchief over his face; on the other, Mademoiselle Julienne, who was crying too, but

with more moderation, perhaps more out of propriety or from infection than from actual grief: at any rate she had more of her senses about her than any one else, and managed to dispose of the various loose articles that had been thrown after the travelers, in pockets and under cushions. Arthur would have assisted, but only succeeded in treading on various toes and eliciting some small shrieks, which disconcerted him all the more, and made Mademoiselle Julienne look daggers at him, as she relieved her lady of little Ulysse, lifting him to her own knee, where, as he was absolutely exhausted with crying, he fell asleep.

Arthur hoped the others would do the same, and perhaps there was more dozing than they would have confessed; but whenever there was a movement, and some familiar object in the street of Paris struck the eye of madame, the abbe, or Estelle, there was a little cry, and they went off on a fresh snore.

"Poor, wretched, weak creatures!" he said to himself, as he thought over the traditions of Scottish heroic women on whose heroism he had gloated. And yet he was wrong; Madame de Bourke was capable of as much resolute self-devotion as any of the ladies on the other side of the channel, but tears were a tribute required by the times. So she gave way to them—just as no doubt women of former days saw nothing absurd in bottling them.

Arthur's position among all these weeping figures was extremely awkward, all the more so that he carried his sword upright between his legs, not daring to disturb the lachrymose company enough to dispose of it in the sword-case appropriated to weapons. He longed to take out the little pocket Virgil, which Lord Nithsdale had given him, so as to have some occupation for his eyes, but he durst not, lest he should be thought rude, till, at a halt at a cabaret to water the horses, the striking of a clock reminded the abbe that it was the time for reading the Hours, and when the breviary was taken out, Arthur thought his book might follow it.

By and by there was a halt at Corbeil, where was the nunnery of Alice Bourke, of whom her brother and sister-in-law were to take leave. They, with the children, were set down there, while Arthur went on with the carriage and servants to the inn to dine.

It was the first visit of Ulysse to the convent, and he was much amazed at peeping at his aunt's hooded face through a grating. However, the family were admitted to dine in the refectory; but poor Madame de Bourke was fit for nothing but to lie on a bed, attended affectionately by her sister-in-law, Sœur Ste. Madeleine.

"O sister, sister," was her cry, "I must say it to you—

I would not to my poor mother—that I have the most horrible presentiments I shall never see her again, nor my poor child. No, nor my husband; I knew it when he took leave of me for that terrible Spain."

"Yet you see he is safe, and you will be with him, sister," returned the nun.

"Ah! that I knew I should! But think of those fearful Pyrenees, and the bandits that infest them—and all the valuables we carry with us!"

"Surely I heard that Marshal Berwick had offered you an escort."

"That will only attract the attention of the brigands and bring them in greater force. O sister, sister, my heart sinks at the thought of my poor children in the hands of those savages! I dream of them every night."

"The suit of an embassador is sacred."

"Ah! but what do they care for that, the robbers? I know destruction lies that way!"

"Nay, sister, this is not like you. You always were brave and trusted Heaven, when you had to follow Ulick."

"Alas! never had I this sinking of heart, which tells me I shall be torn from my poor children and never rejoin him."

Sister Ste. Madeleine caressed and prayed with the poor lady, and did her utmost to reassure and comfort her, promising a *neuvaine* for her safe journey and meeting with her husband.

"For the children," said the poor countess. "I know I never shall see him more."

However, the cheerfulness of the bright Irishwoman had done her some good, and she was better by the time she rose to pursue her journey. Estelle and Ulysse had been much petted by the nuns, and when all met again, to the great relief of Arthur, he found continuous weeping was not *de rigueur*. When they got in again he was able to get rid of his sword, and only trod on two pair of toes and got his legs twice tumbled over.

Moreover, Madame de Bourke had recovered the faculty of making pretty speeches, and when the weapon was put into the sword-case she observed, with a sad little smile, "Ah, monsieur! we look to you as our defender!"

"And me, too!" cried little Ulysse, making a violent demonstration with his tiny blade, and so nearly poking out his uncle's eye that the article was relegated to the same hiding-place as "Monsieur Arture's," and the boy was assured that this was a proof of his manliness.

He had quite recovered his spirits, and as his mother and sister were still exhausted with weeping he was not easy

to manage, till Arthur took heart of grace, and, offering him a perch on his knee, let him look out at the window, explaining the objects on the way, which were all quite new to the little Parisian boy. Fortunately he spoke French well, with scarcely any foreign accent, and his answers to the little fellow's eager questions, interspersed with observations on "What they do in my country," not only kept Ulysse occupied, but gained Estelle's attention, though she was too weary and languid, and perhaps, child as she was, too much bound by the requirements of sympathy, to manifest her interest, otherwise than by moving near enough to listen.

That evening the party reached the banks of one of the canals which connected the rivers of France, and which was to convey them to the Loire and thence to the Rhone, in a huge, flat-bottomed barge, called a *coche d'eau*, a sort of ark, with cabins, where travelers could be fairly comfortable, space where the berlin could be stowed away in the rear, and a deck with an awning where the passengers could disport themselves. From the days of Sully to those of the Revolution, this was by far the most convenient and secure mode of transport, especially in the south of France. It was very convenient to the Bourke party, who were soon established on the deck. The lady's dress was better adapted to traveling than the full costume of Paris. It was what she called *en Amazone*—namely, a cloth riding habit faced with blue, with a short skirt, with open coat and waistcoat, like a man's, hair unpowdered and tied behind, and a large, shady, feathered hat. Estelle wore a miniature of the same, and rejoiced in her freedom from the whalebone stiffness of her Paris life, skipping about the deck with her brother, like fairies, Lanty said, or, as she preferred to make it, "like a nymph."

The water coach moved only by day, and was already arrived before the land one brought the weary party to the place of meeting—a picturesque water-side inn with a high roof and a trellised passage down to the landing-place, covered by a vine hung with clusters of ripe grapes.

Here the travelers supped on omelets and *vin ordinaire*, and went off to bed—madame and her children in one bed, with the maids on the floor, and in another room the abbe and secretary, each in a *grabat*, the two men servants in like manner, on the floor. Such was the privacy of the eighteenth century, and Arthur, used to waiting on himself, looked on with wonder to see the abbe like a baby in the hands of his faithful foster-brother, who talked away in a queer mixture of Irish-English and French all the time until they knelt down and said their prayers together

in Latin, to which Arthur diligently closed his Protestant ears.

Early the next morning the family embarked, the carriage having been already put on board; and the journey became very agreeable as they glided slowly, almost dreamily along, borne chiefly by the current, although a couple of horses towed the barge by a rope on the bank, in case of need, in places where the water was more sluggish, but nothing more was wanting in the descent toward the Mediterranean.

The accommodation was not of a high order, but whenever there was a halt near a good inn Madame de Bourke and the children landed for the night. And in the fine days of early autumn the deck was delightful, and to dine there on the provisions brought on board was a perpetual feast to Estelle and Ulysse.

The weather was beautiful, and there was a constant panorama of fair sights and scenes. Harvest first, a perfectly new spectacle to the children, and then, as they went further south, the vintage. The beauty was great as they glided along the pleasant banks of Rhone.

Tiers of vines on the hillsides were mostly cut and trimmed like currant-bushes, and disappointed Arthur, who had expected festoons on trellises. But this was the special time for beauty. The whole population, in picturesque costumes, were filling huge baskets with the clusters, and snatches of their merry songs came pealing down to the *coche d'eau*, as it quietly crept along. Toward evening groups were seen with piled baskets on their heads, or borne between them, youths and maidens crowned with vines, half-naked children dancing like little Bacchanalians, which awoke classical recollections in Arthur, and delighted the children.

Poor Madame de Bourke was still much depressed, and would sit dreaming half the day, except when roused by some need of her children, some question, or some appeal for her admiration. Otherwise the lovely heights, surmounted with tall towers, extinguisher-capped, of castle, convent, or church, the clear reaches of river, the beautiful turns, the little villages and towns gleaming white among the trees, seemed to pass unseen before her eyes, and she might be seen to shudder when the children pressed her to say how many days it would be before they saw their father.

An observer with a mind at ease might have been much entertained with the airs and graces that the two maids, Rosette and Babette, lavished upon Laurence, their only squire; for Maitre Hebert was far too distant and elderly a person for their little coquetries. Rosette dealt in little

terrors, and, if he was at hand, durst not step across a plank without his hand, was sure she heard wolves howling in the woods, and that every peasant was "*ce barbare;*" while Babette, who in conjunction with Maitre Hebert, acted cook in case of need, plied him with dainty morsels, which he was only too apt to bestow on the beggars, or the lean and hungry lad who attended on the horses. Victorine, on the other hand, by far the prettiest and most sprightly of the three, affected the most supreme indifference to him and his attentions, and hardly deigned to give him a civil word, or to accept the cornflowers and late roses he brought her from time to time. "Mere weeds," she said. And the grapes and Queen Claude plums he brought her were always sour. Yet a something deep blue might often be seen peeping above her trim little apron.

Not that Lanty had much time to disport himself in this fashion, for the abbe was his care, and was perfectly happy with a rod of his arranging, with which to fish over the side. Little Ulysse was of course fired with the same emulation, and dangled his line for an hour together. Estelle would have liked to do the same, but her mother and Mademoiselle Julienne considered the sport not *convenable* for a *demoiselle*. Arthur was once or twice induced to try the abbe's rod, but he found it as mere a toy as that of the boy; and the mere action of throwing it made his heart so sick with the contrast with the "paidling in the burns" of his childhood, that he had no inclination to continue the attempt, either in the slow canal or the broadening river.

He was still very shy with the countess, who was not in spirits to set him at ease; and the abbe puzzled him, as is often the case when inexperienced strangers encounter unacknowledged deficiency. The perpetual coaxing chatter, and undisguised familiarity of La Jeunesse with the young ecclesiastic did not seem to the somewhat haughty cast of his young Scotch mind quite becoming, and he held aloof: but with the two children he was quite at ease, and was in truth their great resource.

He made Ulysse's fishing-rod, baited it, and held the boy when he used it—nay, he once even captured a tiny fish with it, to the ecstatic pity of both children. He played quiet games with them, and told them stories—conversed on Telemaque with Estelle, or read to her from his one book, which was "Robinson Crusoe"—a little black copy in pale print, with the margins almost thumbed away, which he had carried in his pocket when he ran away from school, and nearly knew by heart.

Estelle was deeply interested in it, and varied in opinion whether she should prefer Calypso's island or Crusoe's,

which she took for as much matter of fact as did, a century later, Madame Talleyrand, when, out of civility to Mr. Robinson, she inquired after "*ce bon Vendredi.*"

She inclined to think she should prefer Friday to the nymphs.

"A whole quantity of troublesome womenfolk to fash one," said Arthur, who had not arrived at the age of gallantry.

"You would never stay there!" said Estelle; "you would push us over the rock like Mentor. I think you are our Mentor, for I am sure you tell us a great deal, and you don't scold."

"Mentor was a cross old man," said Ulysse.

To which Estelle replied that he was a goddess; and Arthur very decidedly disclaimed either character, especially the pushing over rocks. And thus they glided on, spending a night in the great busy, bewildering city of Lyons, already the center of silk industry, but more interesting to the travelers as the shrine of the martyrdoms. All went to pray at the cathedral except Arthur. The time was not come for heeding church architecture or primitive history; and he only wandered about the narrow, crooked streets, gazing at the toy piles of market produce, and looking at the stalls of merchandize, but as one unable to purchase. His mother had indeed contrived to send him twenty guineas, but he knew that he must husband them well in case of emergencies, and Lady Nithsdale had sewn them all up, except one, in a belt which he wore under his clothes.

He had arrived at the front of the cathedral when the party came out. Madame de Bourke had been weeping, but looked more peaceful than he had yet seen her, and Estelle was much excited. She had bought a little book, which she insisted on her Mentor's reading with her, though his Protestant feelings recoiled.

"Ah!" said Estelle, "but you are not a Christian."

"Yes, truly, mademoiselle."

"And these died for the Christian faith. Do you know mamma said it comforted her to pray there; for she was sure that whatever happened, the good God can make us strong, as he made the young girl who sat in the red-hot chair. We saw her picture, and it was dreadful. Do read about her, Monsieur Arture."

They read, and Arthur had candor enough to perceive that this was the simple primitive narrative of the death of martyrs struggling for Christian truth, long ere the days of superstition and division. Estelle's face lighted with enthusiasm.

"Is it not noble to be a martyr?" she asked.

"Oh!" cried Ulysse; "to sit in a red-hot chair. It would be worse than to be thrown off a rock! But there are no martyrs in these days, sister?" he added, pressing up to Arthur as if for protection.

"There are those who die for the right," said Arthur, thinking of Lord Derwentwater, who in Jacobite eyes was a martyr.

"And the good God makes them strong," said Estelle, in a low voice. "Mamma told me no one could tell how soon we might be tried, and that I was to pray that he would make us as brave as St. Blandina! What do you think could harm us, monsieur, when we are going to my dear papa?"

It was Lanty who answered, from behind the abbe, on whose angling endeavors he was attending. "Arrah, then, nothing at all, mademoiselle. Nothing in the four corners of the world shall hurt one curl of your blessed little head, while Lanty Callaghan is to the fore."

"Ah! but you are not God, Lanty," said Estelle, gravely; "you cannot keep things from happening."

"The powers forbid that I should spake such blasphemy!" said Lanty, taking off his hat. "'Twas not that I meant, but only that poor Lanty would die ten thousand deaths—worse than them as was thrown to the beasts—before one of them should harm the tip of that little finger of yours!"

Perhaps the same vow was in Arthur's heart, though not spoken in such strong terms.

Thus they drifted on till the old city of Avignon rose on the eyes of the travelers, a dark pile of buildings where the massive houses, built round courts, with few external windows, recalled that these had once been the palaces of cardinals accustomed to the Italian city feuds, which made every house become a fortress.

On the wharf stood a gentleman in a resplendent uniform of blue and gold, whom the children hailed, with cries of joy and outstretched arms, as their uncle. The Marquis de Varennes was soon on board, embracing his sister and her children, and conducting them to one of the great palaces, where he had rooms, being then in garrison. Arthur followed, at a sign from the lady, who presented him to her brother as "Monsieur Arture—a young Scottish gentleman who will do my husband the favor of acting as his secretary.'

She used the word *gentilhomme*, which conveyed the sense of nobility of blood, and the marquis acknowledged the introduction with one of those graceful bows that Arthur hated, because they made him doubly feel the stiff-

ness of his own limitation. He was glad to linger with Lanty, who was looking in wonder at the grim buildings.

"And did the holy father live here?" said he. "Faith, and 'twas a quare taste he must have had; I wonder now if there would be vartue in a bit of a stone from his palace. It would mightily please my old mother if there were."

"I thought it was the wrong popes that lived here," suggested Arthur.

Lanty looked at him a moment, as if in doubt whether to accept a heretic suggestion, but the education received through the abbe came to mind, and he exclaimed:

"Maybe you are in the right of it, sir; and I'd best let the stones alone till I can tell which is the true and which is the false. By the same token, little is the difference it would make to her, unless she knew it; and if she did, she'd as soon I brought her a hair of the old dragon's bristles."

Lanty found another day or two's journey bring him very nearly in contact with the old dragon, for at Tarascon was the cave in which St. Martha was said to have demolished the great dragon of Provence with the sign of the cross. Madame de Bourke and her children made a devout pilgrimage thereto; but when Arthur found that it was the actual Martha of Bethany to whom the legend was appended, he grew indignant, and would not accompany the party. "It was a very different thing from the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne! Their history was credible, but this——"

"Speak not so loud, my friend," said Monsieur de Varennes. "Their shrines are equally good to console women and children."

Arthur did not quite understand the tone, nor know whether to be gratified at being treated as a man, or to be shocked at the marquis' defection from his own faith.

The marquis, who was able to accompany his sister as far as Montpelier, was amused at her two followers, Scotch and Irish, both fine young men—almost too fine, he averred.

"You will have to keep a careful watch on them when you enter Germany, sister," he said, "or the King of Prussia will certainly kidnap them for his tall regiment of grenadiers."

"Oh, brother, do not speak of any more dangers; I see quite enough before me ere I can even rejoin my dear husband."

A very serious council was held between the brother and sister. The French army, under Marshal Berwick, had marched across on the south side on the Pyrenees, and was probably by this time in the county of Rousillon, intending to besiege Rosas. Once with them all would be well,

but between lay the mountain roads, and the very quarter of Spain that had been most unwilling to accept French rule.

The marquis had been authorized to place an escort at his sister's service, but though the numbers might guard her against mere mountain banditti, they would not be sufficient to protect her from hostile troops, such as might only too possibly be on the way to encounter Berwick. The expense and difficulty of the journey on the mountain roads would likewise be great, and it seemed advisable to avoid these dangers by going by sea. Madame de Bourke eagerly acceded to this plan, her terror of the wild Pyrenean passes and wilder inhabitants had always been such that she was glad to catch at any means of avoiding them, and she had made more than one voyage before.

Estelle was gratified to find they were to go by sea, since Telemachus did so in a Phœnician ship, and, in that odd, dreamy way in which children blend fiction and reality, wondered if they should come on Calypso's island; and Arthur, who had read the "Odyssey," delighted her and terrified Ulysse with the cave of Polyphemus. Monsieur de Varennes could only go with his sister as far as Montpelier. Then he took leave of her, and the party proceeded along the shores of the lagoons in the carriage to the seaport of Cette, one of the old Greek towns of the Gulf of Lyons, and with a fine harbor full of ships. Maitre Hebert was sent to take a passage on board of one, while his lady and her party repaired to an inn, and waited all the afternoon before he returned with tidings that he could find no French vessel about to sail for Spain, but that there was a Genoese tartan, bound for Barcelona, on which Madame la Comtesse could secure a passage for herself and her suit, and which would take her thither in twenty-four hours.

The town was full of troops, waiting a summoms to join Marshal Berwick's army. Several resplendent officers had already paid their respects to Madame l'Embassadrice, and they concurred in the advice, unless she would prefer waiting for the arrival of one of the French transports which were to take men and provisions to the army in Spain.

This, however, she declined, and only accepted the services of the gentlemen so far as to have her passports renewed, as was needful, since they were to be conveyed by the vessel of an independent power, though always an ally of France.

The tartan was a beautiful object, a one-decked, single-masted vessel, with a long bowsprit, and a huge lateen sail like a wing, and the children fell in love with her at first

sight. Estelle was quite sure that she was just such a ship as Mentor borrowed for Telemachus; but the poor maids were horribly frightened, and Babette might be heard declaring she had never engaged herself to be at the mercy of the waves, like a bit of lemon-peel in a glass of *eau sucree.*

"You may return," said Madame de Bourke. "I compel no one to share our dangers and hardships."

But Babette threw herself on her knees, and declared that nothing should ever separate her from madame! She was a good creature, but she could not deny herself the luxury of the sobs and tears that showed to all beholders the extent of her sacrifice.

Madame de Bourke knew that there would be considerable discomfort in a vessel so little adapted for passengers, and with only one small cabin, which the captain, who spoke French, resigned to her use. It would only, however, be for a short time, and though it was near the end of October, the blue expanse of sea was calm as only the Mediterranean can be, so that she trusted that no harm would result to those who would have to spend the night on deck.

It was a beautiful evening when the little Genoese vessel left the harbor and Cette receded in the distance, looking fairer the further it was left behind. The children were put to bed as soon as they could be persuaded to cease from watching the lights in the harbor and the phosphorescent wake of the vessel in the water.

That night and the next day were pleasant and peaceful; there was no rough weather, and little sickness among the travelers. Madame de Bourke congratulated herself on having escaped the horrors of the Pyrenean journey, and the Genoese captain assured her that unless the weather should change rapidly they would wake in sight of the Spanish coast the next morning. If the sea were not almost too calm, they would be there already. The evening was again so delightful that the children were glad to hear that they would have again to return by sea, and Arthur, who somewhat shrank from his presentation to the count, regretted that the end of the voyage was so near, though Ulysse assured him that "*Mon papa* would love him, because he could tell such charming stories," and Lanty testified that "Monsieur le Comte was a mighty friendly gentleman."

Arthur was lying asleep on deck, wrapped in his cloak, when he was awakened by a commotion among the sailors. He started up and found that it was early morning, the sun rising above the sea, and the sailors all gazing eagerly in that direction. He eagerly made his way to ask

if they were in sight of land, recollecting, however, as he made the first step, that Spain lay to the west of them—not to the east.

He distinguished the cry from the Genoese, sailors, "*Il Moro—Il Moro*," in tones of horror and consternation, and almost at the same moment received a shock from Maitre Hebert, who came stumbling against him.

"Pardon, pardon, monsieur; I go to prepare madame! It's the accursed Moors. Let me pass—*misericorde*, what will become of us?"

Arthur struggled on in search of such of the crew as could speak French, but all were in too much consternation to attend to him, and he could only watch that to which their eyes were directed, a white sail, bright in the morning light, coming up with a rapidity strange and fearful in its precision, like a hawk pouncing on its prey, for it did not depend on its sails alone, but was propelled by oars.

The next moment Madame de Bourke was on deck, holding by the abbe's arm, and Estelle, her hair on her shoulders, clinging to her. She looked very pale, but her calmness was in contrast to the Italian sailors, who were throwing themselves with gestures of despair, screaming out vows to the Madonna and saints, and shouting imprecations. The skipper came to speak to her. "Madame," he said, "I implore you to remain in your cabin. After the first, you and all yours will be safe. They cannot harm a French subject; alas! alas! would it were so with us!"

"How then will it be with you," she asked.

He made a gesture of deprecation.

"For me it will be ruin; for my poor fellows slavery; that is, if we survive the onset. Madame, I entreat of you, take shelter in the cabin, yourself and all yours. None can answer for what the first rush of these fiends may be! *Diavalo! veri diavalo!* Ah! for which of my sins is it that after fifty voyages I should be condemned to lose my all?"

A fresh outburst of screams from the crew summoned the captain. "They are putting out the long boat," was the cry; "they will board us!"

"Madame! I entreat of you, shut yourself into the cabin."

And the four maids, in various stages of *deshabille*, adding their cries to those of the sailors, tried to drag her in, but she looked about for Arthur. "Come with us, monsieur," she said, quietly, for after all her previous depressions and alarms, her spirit rose to endurance in the actual stress of danger. "Come with us, I entreat of you," she said. "You are named in our passports, and the treaties are such that neither French nor English subjects can

be maltreated nor enslaved by these wretches. As the captain says, the danger is only in the first attack."

"I will protect you, madame, with my life," declared Arthur, drawing his sword, as his cheeks and eyes lighted.

"Ah, put that away. What could you do but lose your own?" cried the lady. "Remember that you have a mother——"

The Genoese captain here turned to insist that madame and all the women should shut themselves instantly into the cabin. Estelle dragged hard at Arthur's hand, with entreaties that he would come, but he lifted her down the ladder, and then closed the door on her, Lanty and he being both left outside.

"To be shut into a hole like a rat in a trap when there's blows to the fore is more than flesh could stand," said Lanty, who had seized on a handspike and was waving it about his head, true shillalah fashion, by hereditary instinct in one who had never beheld a faction fight, in what ought to have been his native land.

The Genoese captain looked at him as a madman, and shouted in a confused mixture of French and Italian to lay down his weapon.

"*Quei cattivi—ces scelerats* were armed to the teeth—would fire. All lie flat on the deck!"

The gesture spoke for itself. With a fearful howl all the Italians dropped flat; but neither Scotch nor Irish blood brooked to follow their example, or perhaps fully perceived the urgency of the need, till a volley of bullets were whistling about their ears, though happily without injury, the mast and rigging having protected them, for the sail was riddled with holes, and the smoke dimmed their vision as the report sounded in their ears. In another second the turbaned, cimetered figures were leaping on board.

The Genoese still lay flat, offering no resistance, but Lanty and Arthur stood on either side of the ladder, and hurled back the two who first approached; but four or five more rushed upon them, and they would have been instantly cut down, had it not been for a shout from the Genoese, "*Franchi! Franchi!*" At that magic word, which was evidently understood, the pirates only held the two youths tightly, vituperating them no doubt in bad Arabic, Lanty grinding his teeth with rage, though scarcely feeling the pain of the two saber cuts he had received, and pouring forth a volley of exclamations, chiefly, however, directed against the white-livered spalpeens of sailors, who had not lifted so much as a hand to help him. Fortunately no one understood a word he said but Arthur, who had military experience enough to know there was nothing for

it but to stand still in the grasp of his captor, a wiry-looking Moor, with a fez, and a striped sash round his waist.

The leader, a sturdy Turk in a dirty white turban, with a huge saber in his hand, was listening to the eager words, poured out with many gesticulations by the Genoese captain, in a language utterly incomprehensible to the Scot, but which was the *lingua Franca* of the Mediterranean ports.

It resulted in four men being placed on guard at the hatchway leading to the cabin, while all the rest, including Arthur, Hebert, Laurence, were driven toward the prow, and made to understand by signs that they must not move on peril of their lives. A Turk was placed at the helm, and the tartan's head turned toward the pirate captor; and all the others, who were not employed otherwise, began to ransack the vessel and feast on the provisions. Some hams were thrown overboard, with shouts of evident scorn as belonging to the unclean beast, but the wine was eagerly drunk, and Maitre Hebert uttered a wail of dismay as he saw five Moors gorging large pieces of his finest *pate.*

CHAPTER IV.

WRECKED.

"They had na sailed upon the sea
A day but barely three,
When the lift grew dark and the wind blew cauld,
And gurly grew the sea.

"Oh, where will I find a little wee boy
Will tak my helm in hand,
Till I gae up to my topmast
And see for some dry land?"

Sir Patrick Spens.

It was bad enough on the deck of the unfortunate Genoese tartan, but far worse below, where eight persons were shut into the stifling atmosphere of the cabin, deprived of the knowledge of what was going on above, except from the terrific sounds they heard. Estelle, on being shut into the cabin, announced that the Phœnician ship was taken by the vessels of Sesostris, but this did not afford any one else the same satisfaction as she appeared to derive from it. Babette and Rosette were echoing every scream of the crew, and quite certain that all would be massacred, and little Ulysse, wakened by the hubbub, rolled round in his berth and began to cry.

Madame de Bourke, very white, but quite calm, insisted on silence, and then said: "I do not think the danger is

very great to ourselves if you will keep silence and not attract attention. But our hope is in Heaven. My brother, will you lead our prayers? Recite our office." Obediently the abbe fell on his knees, and his example was followed by the others. His voice went monotonously on throughout with the Latin. The lady, no doubt, followed in her heart, and she made the responses as did the others, fitfully; but her hands and eyes were busy, looking to the priming of two small pistols, which she took out of her jewel-case, and the sight of which provoked fresh shrieks from the maids. Mademoiselle Julienne meantime was dressing Ulysse, and standing guard over him, Estelle watching all with eager, bright eyes, scarcely frightened, but burning to ask questions, from which her uncle's prayers debarred her.

At the volley of shot, Rosette was reduced to quiet by a swoon, but Victorine, screaming that the wretches had killed Laurent, would have rushed on deck had not her mistress forcibly withheld her. There ensued a prodigious yelling and howling, trampling and scuffling, then the sounds of strange languages in vituperation or command, steps coming down the ladder, sounds of altercation, retreat, splashes in the sea, the feeling that the ship was put about—and ever the trampling, the wild cries of exultation, which over and over again made the prisoners feel choked with the horror of some frightful crisis close at hand. And all the time they were in ignorance their little window in the stern showed them nothing but sea; and even if Madame de Bourke's determination had not hindered Victorine from peeping out of the cabin, whether prison or fortress, the Moorish sentries outside kept the door closed.

How long this continued was scarcely to be guessed. It was hours by their own feelings; Ulysse began to cry from hunger, and his mother gave him and Estelle some cakes that were within reach. Mademoiselle Julienne begged her lady to share the repast, reminding her that she would need all her strength. The abbe, too, was hungry enough, and some wine and preserved fruits coming to light, all the prisoners made a meal which heartened most of them considerably; although the heat was becoming terrible, as the sun rose higher in the sky, and very little air could be obtained through the window, so that poor Julienne could not eat, and Rosette fell into a heavy sleep in the midst of her sighs. Even Estelle, who had got out her Telemaque, like a sort of oracle in the course of being verified, was asleep over it, when fresh noises and grating sounds were heard, new steps on deck, and there were steps and voices. The Genoese captain was heard exclaiming: "Open, ma-

dame! you can do so safely. This is the Algerine captain, who is bound to protect you."

The maids huddled together behind their lady, who stood forward as the door opened to admit a stout, squarely-built man in the typical dress of a Turk—white turban, purple coat, broad sash crammed with weapons, and ample trousers—a truculent figure which made the maids shudder and embrace one another with suppressed shrieks, but which somehow, even in the midst of his Eastern salaam, gave the countess a sense that he was acting a comedy, and carried her involuntarily back to the Moors whom she had seen in the "Cid" on the stage. And looking again, she perceived that though brown and weather-beaten, there was a certain Northern ruddiness inherent in his complexion; that his eyes were gray, so far as they were visible between the surrounding puckers; and his eyebrows, mustache, and beard not nearly so dark as the hair of the Genoese who stood cringing beside him as interpreter. She formed her own conclusions and adhered to them, though he spoke in bad Arabic to the skipper, who proceeded to explain that El Reis Hamed would offer no injury to Madame la Comtesse, her suit or property, being bound by treaty between the dey and the King of France, but that he required to see her passport. There was a little blundering in the Italian's French rendering, and Madame de Bourke was quick to detect the perception of it in the countenance of the reis, stolid though it was. She felt no doubt that he was a renegade of European birth, and watched with much anxiety as well as curiosity, his manner of dealing with her passports, which she would not let out of her own hands. She saw in a moment that though he let the Genoese begin to interpret them, his eyes were following intelligently; and she hazarded the observation, "You understand, sir. You are Frank?"

He turned one startled glance toward the door to see if there were any listeners, and answered, "Hollander, madame."

The countess had traveled with diplomatists all her life, and knew a little of the vernacular of most languages, and it was in Dutch—broken indeed, but still Dutch—that she declared that she was sure that she might rely on his protection—a security which in truth she was far from feeling; for while some of these unfortunate men, renegades only from weakness, yearned after their compatriots and their lost home and faith, others out-Heroded the Moors themselves in ferocity, especially toward the Christian captives; nor was a Dutchman likely to have any special tenderness in his composition, above all toward the French. However, there was a certain smile on the lips of Reis

Hamed, and he answered with a very hearty, "Ja! ja! madame. Upon my soul I will let no harm come to you or the pretty little ones, nor the young vrouwkins either, if they will keep close. You are safe by treaty. A reis would have to pay a heavy reckoning with Mehemed Dey if a French embassador had to complain of him, and you will bear me witness, madame, that I have not touched a hair of any of your heads!"

."I am sure you wish me well, sir," said Madame de Bourke, in a dignified way, "but I require to be certified of the safety of the rest of my suit, my steward, my lackey, and my husband's secretary, a young gentleman of noble birth."

"They are safe, madame. This Italian slave can bear me witness that no creature has been harmed since my crew boarded this vessel."

"I desire then that they may be released, as being named in my passport."

To this the Dutchman consented.

Whereupon the skipper began to wring his hands, and piteously to beseech madame to intercede for him, but the Dutchman cut him short before she could speak. "Dog of an Italian, the lady knows better! You and your fellows are our prize--poor enough after all the trouble you have given us in chasing you."

Madame de Bourke spoke kindly to the poor man, telling him that though she could do nothing for him now, it was possible that she might when she should have rejoined her husband, and she then requested the reis to land her and her suit in his long-boat on the Spanish coast, which could be seen in the distance, promising him ample reward if he would do so.

To this he replied, "Madame, you ask what would be death to me."

He went on to explain that if he landed her on Christian ground, without first presenting her and her passport to the dey and the French consul, his men might represent him as acting in the interests of the Christians, and as a traitor to the Algerine power, by taking a bribe from a person belonging to a hostile state, in which case the bow-string would be the utmost mercy he could expect; and the reigning dey, Mehemed, having been only recently chosen, it was impossible to guess how he might deal with such cases. Once at Algiers, he assured Madame de Bourke that she would have nothing to fear, as she would be under the protection of the French consul; and she had no choice but to submit, though much concerned for the continued anxiety to her husband, as well as the long delay and uncertainty of finding him.

Still, when she perceived that it was inevitable, she complained no more, and the Dutchman went on with a certain bluff kindness—as one touched by her courtesy—to offer her the choice of remaining in the tartan or coming on board his larger vessel. The latter he did not recommend, as he had a crew of full two hundred Turks and Moors, and it would be necessary to keep herself and all her women as closely as possible secluded in the cabins; and even then, he added, that if once seen he could hardly answer for some of these corsairs not endeavoring to secure a fair young Frank girl for his harem; and as his eye fell on Rosette, she bridled and hid herself behind Mademoiselle Julienne.

He must, he said, remove all the Genoese, but he would send on board the tartan only seven men, on whom he could perfectly depend for respectful behavior, so that the captives would be able to take the air on deck as freely as before. There was no doubt that he was in earnest, and the lady accepted his offer with thanks, all the stronger since she and all around her were panting and sick for want of fresh air.

It was a great relief when he took her on deck with him that she might identify the three men whom she claimed as belonging to her suit. Arthur, Lanty, and Hebert, who, in their vague knowledge of the circumstances, had been dreading the oar for the rest of their lives, could hardly believe their good-fortune when she called them up to her, and the abbe gripped Lanty's arm as if he would never let him go again. The poor Italians seemed to feel their fate all the harder for the deliverance of these three, and sobbed, howled, and wept so piteously that Arthur wondered how strong men could so give way, while Lanty's tears sprung forth in sympathy, and he uttered assurances and made signs that he would never cease to pray for their rescue.

"Though," as he observed, "they were poor creatures that hadn't the heart of a midge, when there was such a chance of a fight while the haythen spalpeens were coming on board."

Here Lanty was called on to assist Hebert in identifying his lady's bales of goods, when all those of the unfortunate Genoese were put on board the corsair's vessel. A sail-cloth partition was extended across the deck by the care of the Dutchman, "who"—as Lanty said—"for a haythen apostate was a very dacent man." He evidently had a strong compassion and fellow-feeling for the Christian lady, and assured her that she might safely take the air and sit on deck as much as she pleased behind its shelter; and he likewise carefully selected the seven of his crew

whom he sent on board to work the ship, the chief being a heavy-looking old Turk, with a chocolate-colored visage between a huge white beard and eyebrows, and the others mere lads, except one, who, from an indefinable European air about him, was evidently a renegade, and could speak a sort of French, so as to hold communication with the captives, especially Lanty, who was much quicker than any of the rest in picking up languages, perhaps from having from his infancy talked French and English (or rather Irish), and likewise learned Latin with his foster-brother. This man was the only one permitted to go astern of the partition, in case of need, to attend to the helm; but the vessel was taken in tow by the corsair, and needed little management. The old Turk seemed to regard the Frankish women like so many basilisks, and avoided turning a glance in their direction, roaring at his crew if he only saw them approaching the sail-cloth, and keeping a close watch upon the lithe, black-eyed youths, whose brown limbs carried them up the mast with the agility of monkeys.

There was one in especial—a slight, well-made fellow, about twenty, with a white turban cleaner than the rest—who contrived to cast wonderful glances from the mast-head over the barrier at Rosette, who actually smiled in return at *ce pauvre garcon*, and smiled the more for Mademoiselle Julienne's indignation. Suddenly, however, a shrill shout made him descend hastily, and the old Turk's voice might be heard in its highest key, no doubt shrieking out maledictions on all the ancestry of the son of a dog who durst defile his eyes with gazing at the shameless daughters of the Frank. Little Ulysse was, however, allowed to disport himself wherever he pleased; and after once, under Arthur's protection, going forward, he found himself made very welcome, and offered various curiosities, such as shells, corals, and a curious dried little hippocampus, or sea-horse.

This he brought back in triumph, to the extreme delight of his sister's classical mind. "Oh, mamma, mamma!" she cried, "Ulysse really has got the skeleton of a Triton. It is exactly like the stone creatures in the Champs Elysees."

There was no denying the resemblance, and it so increased the confusion in Estelle's mind between the actual and the mythological, that Arthur told her that she was looking out for the car of Amphitrite to arise from the waters. Anxiety and trouble had made him much better acquainted with Madame de Bourke, who was grateful to him for his kindness to her children, and not without concern as to whether she should be able to procure his re-

lease as well as her own at Algiers. For Laurence Callaghan she had no fears, since he was born at Paris, and a naturalized French subject like her husband and his brother; but Arthur was undoubtedly a Briton, and unless she could pass him off as one of her suit, it would depend on the temper of the English consul whether he should be viewed as a subject or as a rebel, or simply left to captivity until his Scottish relations should have the choice of ransoming him.

She took a good deal of pains to explain the circumstances to him as well as to all who could understand them; for though she hoped to keep all together, and to be able to act for them herself, no one could guess how they might be separated, and she could not shake off that foreboding of misfortune which had haunted her from the first.

The kingdom of Algiers was, she told them, tributary to the Turkish sultan, who kept a guard of janizaries there, from among whom they themselves elected the dey. He was supposed to govern by the consent of a divan, but was practically as despotic as any Eastern sovereign; and the aga of the janizaries was next in authority to him. Piracy on the Mediterranean was, as all knew, the chief occupation of the Turks and Moors of any spirit or enterprise, a Turk being in authority in each vessel to make sure that the sultan had his share, and that the capture was so conducted as not to involve Turkey in dangerous wars with European powers. Capture by the Moors had for several centuries been one of the ordinary contingencies of a voyage, and the misfortune that had happened to the party was not at all an unusual one.

In 1687, however, the nuisance had grown to such a height that Admiral Du Quesne bombarded the town of Algiers and destroyed all the fortifications, peace being only granted on condition that a French consul should reside at Algiers, and that French ships and subjects should be exempt from this violence of the corsairs.

The like treaties existed with the English, but had been very little heeded by the Algerines till recently, when the possession of Gibraltar and Minorca had provided harbors for British ships, which exercised a salutary supervision over these Southern sea-kings. The last dey, Baba Hali, had been a wise and prudent man, anxious to repress outrage, and to be on good terms with the two great European powers; but he had died in the spring of the current year, 1718, and the temper of his successor, Mehemed, had not yet been proved.

Madame de Bourke had some trust in the Dutch reis, renegade though he was. She had given him her beauti-

ful watch set with brilliants, and he had taken it with a certain gruff reluctance, declaring that he did not want it; he was ready enough to serve her without such a toy.

Nevertheless the lady thought it well to impress on each and all, in case of any separation or further disaster, that their appeal must be to the French consul, explaining minutely the forms in which it should be made.

"I cannot tell you," she said to Arthur, "how great a comfort it is to me to have with me a gentleman, one of intelligence and education, to whom I can confide my poor children. I know you will do your utmost to protect them and restore them to their father."

"With my very heart's blood, madame."

"I hope that may not be asked of you, monsieur," she returned, with a faint smile, "though I fear there may be much of perplexity and difficulty in the way before again rejoining him. You see where I have placed our passports? My daughter knows it likewise; but in case of their being taken from you, or any other accident happening to you, I have written these two letters, which you had better bear about your person. One is, as you see, to our consul at Algiers, and may serve as credentials; the other is to my husband, to whom I have already written respecting you."

"A thousand thanks, madame," returned Arthur. "But I hope and trust we may all reach Monsieur le Comte in safety together. You yourself said that you expected only a brief detention before he could be communicated with, and this captain, renegade though he be, evidently has a respect for you."

"That is quite true," she returned, "and it may only be my foolish heart that forebodes evil; nevertheless, I cannot but recollect that *c'est l'imprevu qui arrive.*"

"Then, madame, that is the very reason there should be no misfortune," returned Arthur.

It was on the second day after the capture of the tartan that the sun set in a purple, angry-looking bank of cloud, and the sea began to heave in a manner which renewed the earlier distresses of the voyage to such as were bad sailors. The sails both of the corsair and of the tartan were taken in, and it was plain that a rough night was to be expected. The children were lashed into their berths, and all prepared themselves to endure. The last time Arthur saw Madame de Bourke's face, by the light of the lamp swinging furiously from the cabin roof, as he assisted in putting in the dead lights, it bore the same fixed expression of fortitude and resignation as when she was preparing for the boarding by the pirates.

He remained on deck, but it was very perilous, for the

vessel was so low in the water that the waves dashed over it so wildly that he could hardly help being swept away. It was pitch dark, too, and the lantern of the other vessel could only just be seen, now high above their heads, now sinking in the trough of the sea, while the little tartan was lifted up as though on a mountain; and in a kind of giddy dream, he thought of falling headlong upon her deck. Finally he found himself falling. Was he washed overboard? No; a sharp blow showed him that he had only fallen down the hatchway, and after lying still a moment, he heard the voices of Lanty and Hebert, and presently they were all tossed together by another lurch of the ship.

It was a night of miseries that seemed endless, and when a certain amount of light appeared, and Arthur and Lanty crawled upon deck, the tempest was unabated. They found themselves still dashed, as if their vessel were a mere cork, on the huge waves; rushes of water coming over them, whether from sea or sky there was no knowing, for all seemed blended together in one mass of dark, lurid gray; and where was the Algerine ship—so lately their great enemy, now watched for as their guide and guardian?

It was no place nor time for questions, even could they have been heard or understood. It was scarcely possible even to be heard by one another; and it was some time before they convinced themselves that the large vessel had disappeared. The cable must have parted in the night, and they were running with bare poles before the gale; the seamanship of the man at the helm being confined to avoiding the more direct blows of the waves, on the huge crests of which the little tartan rode—gallantly perhaps in mariner's eyes, but very wretchedly to the feelings of the unhappy landsmen within her.

Arthur thought of St. Paul, and remembered with dismay that it was many days before sun or moon appeared. He managed to communicate his recollection to Lanty, who exclaimed, "And he was a holy man, and he was a prisoner, too. He will feel for us if any man can in this sore strait! *Sancte Paule, ora pro nobis.* An' haven't I got the blessed scapulary about my neck that will bring me through worse than this?"

The three managed to get down to tell the unfortunate inmates of the cabin what was the state of things, and to carry them some food, though at the expense of many falls and severe blows; and almost all of them were too faint or nauseated to be able to swallow such food as could survive the transport under such circumstances. Yet high-spirited little Estelle entreated to be carried on deck,

to see what a storm was like. She had read of them so often, and wanted to see as well as to feel. She was almost ready to cry when Arthur assured her it was quite impossible, and her mother added a grave order not to trouble him.

Madame de Bourke looked so exhausted by the continual buffeting and closeness of the cabin, and her voice was so weak, that Arthur grieved over the impossibility of giving her any air. Julienne tried to make her swallow some *eau de vie;* but the effort of steadying her hand seemed too much for her, and after a terrible lurch of the ship, which lodged the poor *bonne* in the opposite corner of the cabin, the lady shook her head and gave up the attempt. Indeed, she seemed so worn out that Arthur—little used to the sight of fainting—began to fear that her forebodings of dying before she could rejoin her husband were on the point of being realized.

However, the gale abated toward evening, and the youth himself was so much worn out that his first respite was spent in sleep. When he awoke, the sea was much calmer, and the eastern sun was rising in glory over it; the Turks, with their prayer-carpets in line, were simultaneously kneeling and bowing in prayer, with their faces turned toward it. Lanty uttered an only too emphatic curse upon the misbelievers, and Arthur vainly tried to make him believe that their "Allah il Allah" was neither addressed to Mohammed nor the sun.

"Sure and if not, why did they make their obeisance to it all one as the Persians in the big histhory-book Master Phelim had at school?"

"It's to the east they turn, Lanty, not to the sun."

"And what right have the haythen spalpeens to turn to the east like good Christians?"

"'Tis to their prophet's tomb they look, at Mecca."

"There, an' I tould you they were no better than haythens," returned Lanty, "to be praying and knocking their heads on the bare boards—that have as much sense as they have—to a dead man's tomb."

Arthur's Scotch mind thought the Moors might have had the best of it in an argument when he recollected Lanty's trust in his scapulary.

They tried to hold a conversation with the reis, between *lingua Franca* and the provencal of the renegade; and they came to the conclusion that no one had the least idea where they were, or where they were going; the ship's compass had been broken in the boarding, and there was no chart more available than the little map in the beginning of Estelle's precious copy of Telemaque. The Turkish reis did not trouble himself about it, but squatted himself

down with his chibouque, abandoning all guidance of the ship, and letting her drift at the will of wind and wave, or, as he said, the will of Allah. When asked where he thought she was going, he replied, with solemn indifference, "Kismet;" and all the survivors of the crew—for one had been washed overboard—seemed to share his resignation.

The only thing he did seem to care for was that if the infidel woman chose to persist in coming on deck, the canvas screen—which had been washed overboard—should be restored. This was done, and Madame de Bourke was assisted to a couch that had been prepared for her with cloaks, where the air revived her a little; but she listened with a faint smile to the assurances of Arthur, backed by Hebert, that this abandonment to fate gave the best chance. They might either be picked up by a Christian vessel or go ashore on a Christian coast; but Madame de Bourke did not build much on these hopes. She knew too well what were the habits of wreckers of all nations to think that it would make much difference whether they were driven on the coast of Sicily or of Africa—"barring," as Lanty said, "that they should get Christian burial in the former case."

"We are in the hands of a good God. That at least we know," said the countess. "And he can bear us through, whether for life in paradise, or trial a little longer here below."

"Like Blandina," observed Estelle.

"Ah! my child, who knows whether trials like even that blessed saint's may not be in reserve even for your tender age. When I think of these miserable men, who have renounced their faith, I see what fearful ordeals there may be for those who fall into the hands of these unbelievers. Strong men have yielded. How may it not be with my poor children?"

"God made Blandina brave, mamma. I will pray that he may make me so."

Land was in sight at last. Purple mountains rose to the south in wild forms, looking strangely thunderous and red in the light of the sinking sun. A bay, with rocks jutting out far into the sea, seemed to embrace them with its arms. Soundings were made, and presently the reis decided on anchoring. It was a rocky coast with cliffs descending into the sea, covered with verdure, and the water beneath was clear as glass.

"Have we escaped the Syrtes to fall upon Æneas' cave?" murmured Arthur to himself.

"And if we could meet Queen Dido, or maybe Venus herself, 'twould be no bad thing!" observed Lanty, who remembered his Virgil on occasion. "For there's not a

drop of wather left barring *eau de vie*, and if these Moors get at that, 'tis raving madmen they would be."

"Do they know where we are?" asked Arthur.

"Sorrah a bit!" returned Lanty, "tho' 'tis a pretty place enough. If my old mother was here, 'tis her heart would warm to the mountains."

"Is it Calypso's Island?" whispered Ulysse to his sister.

"See, what are they doing?" cried Estelle. "There are people—don't you see, white specks crowding down to the water."

There was just then a splash, and two bronzed figures were seen setting forth from the tartan to swim to shore. The Turkish reis had dispatched them, to ascertain whither the vessel had drifted and who the inhabitants might be.

A good while elapsed before one of these scouts returned. There was a great deal of talk and gesticulating round him, and Lanty, mingling with it, brought back word that the place was the Bay of Golo, not far from Djigheli, and just beyond the Algerine frontier. The people were Cabeleyzes, a wild race of savage dogs, which means dogs according to the Moors, living in the mountains, and independent of the dey. A considerable number rushed to the coast, armed; and many, perceiving the tartan to be an Italian vessel, expected a raid by Sicilian robbers on their cattle; but the Moors had informed them that it was no such thing, but a prize taken in the name of the Dey of Algiers, in which an illustrious French bey's harem was being conveyed to Algiers. From that city the tartan was now about a day's sail, having been driven to the eastward of it during the storm. "The Turkish commander evidently does not like the neighborhood," said Arthur, "judging by his gestures."

"Dogs and sons of dogs are the best names he has for them," rejoined Lanty.

"See! They have cut the cable! Are we not to wait for the other man who swam ashore?"

So it was. A favorable wind was blowing, and the reis, being by no means certain of the disposition of the Cabeleyzes, chose to leave them behind him as soon as possible and make his way to Algiers, which began to appear to his unfortunate passengers like a haven of safety.

They were not, however, out of the bay when the wind suddenly veered, and before the lateen sail could be reefed it had almost caused the vessel to be blown over. There was a pitching and tossing almost as violent as in the storm, and then wind and current began carrying the tartan toward the rocky shore. The reis called the men to

the oars, but their numbers were too few to be availing, and in a very few minutes more the vessel was driven hopelessly toward a mass of rocks.

Arthur, the abbe, Hebert, and Lanty were all standing together at the head of the vessel. The poor abbe seemed dazed, and kept dreamily fingering his rosary, and murmuring to himself. The other three consulted in a low voice.

"Were it not better to have the women here on deck?" asked Arthur.

"*Eh, non!*" sobbed Master Hebert. "Let not my poor mistress see what is coming on her and her little ones!"

"Ah! and 'tis better, if the innocent creatures must be drowned, that it should be without being insensed of it till they wake in our Lady's blessed arms," added Lanty. "Hark! and they are at their prayers."

But just then Victorine rushed up from below, and threw her arms round Lanty, cried, "Oh! Laurent, Laurent! It is not true that it is all over with us, is it? Oh! save me! save me!"

"And if I cannot save you, mine own heart's core, we'll die together," returned the poor fellow, holding her fast. "It won't last long, Victorine, and the saints have a hold of my scapulary."

He had scarcely spoken when, lifted upon a wave, the Tartan dashed upon the rocks, and there was at once a horrible shivering and crashing throughout her—a frightful mingling of shrieks and yells of despair with the wild roar of the waves that poured over her. The party at the head of the vessel were conscious of clinging to something, and when the first hurly-burly ceased a little they found themselves all together against the bulwark, the vessel almost on her beam ends, wedged into the rocks, their portion high and dry, but the stern, where the cabin was, entirely under water.

Victorine screamed aloud, "My lady! my poor lady!"

"I see—I see something," cried Arthur, who had already thrown off his coat, and in another moment he had brought up Estelle in his arms, alive, sobbing and panting. Giving her over to the steward, he made another dive, but then was lost sight of, and returned no more, nor was anything to be seen of the rest. Shut up in the cabin, Madame de Bourke, Ulysse, and the three maids must have been instantly drowned, and none of the crew were to be seen. Maitre Hebert held the little girl in his arms, glad that, though living, she was only half conscious. Victorine, sobbing, hung heavily on Lanty, and before he could free his hands he perceived to his dismay that the

abbe, unassisted, was climbing down from the wreck upon the rock, scarcely perhaps aware of his danger.

Lanty tried to put Victorine aside, and called out, "Your reverence, wait—Masther Phelim, wait till I come and help you." But the girl, frantic with terror, grappled him fast, screaming to him not to let her go—and at the same moment a wave broke over the abbe. Lanty, almost wild, was ready to leap into it after him, thinking he must be sucked back with it, but behold! he still remained clinging to the rock. Instinct seemed to serve him, for he had stuck his knife into the rock and was holding on by it. There seemed no foothold, and while Lanty was deliberating how to go to his assistance, another wave washed him off and bore him to the next rock, which was only separated from the mainland by a channel of smoother water. He tried to catch at a floating plank, but in vain; however, an oar next drifted toward him, and by it he gained the land, but only to be instantly surrounded by a mob of Cabeleyzes, who seemed to be stripping off his garments.

By this time many were swimming toward the wreck; and Estelle, who had recovered breath and senses, looked over Hebert's shoulder at them. "The savages! the infidels!" she said. "Will they kill me? or will they try to make me renounce my faith? They shall kill me rather than make me yield."

"Ah! yes, my dear demoiselle, that is right. That is the only way. It is my resolution likewise," returned Hebert. "God give us grace to persist."

"My mamma said so," repeated the child. "Is she drowned, Maitre Hebert?"

"She is happier than we are, my dear young lady."

"And my little brother, too! Ah! then I shall remember that they are only sending me to them in paradise."

By this time the natives were near the wreck, and Estelle, shuddering, clung closer to Hebert; but he had made up his mind what to do. "I must commit you to these men, mademoiselle," he said; "the water is rising—we shall perish if we remain here."

"Ah! but it would not hurt so much to be drowned," said Estelle, who had made up her mind to Blandina's chair.

"I must endeavor to save you for your father, mademoiselle, and your poor grandfather! There! be a good child! Do not struggle."

He had attracted the attention of some of the swimmers, and he now flung her to them. One caught her by an arm, another by a leg, and she was safely taken to the shore, where at once a shoe and a stocking were taken from her,

in token of her becoming a captive; but otherwise her garments were not meddled with; in which she was happier than her uncle, whom she found crouched up on a rock, stripped almost to the skin, so that he shrunk from her, when she sprung to his side amid the Babel of wild men and women, who were shouting in exultation and wonder over his big flapped hat, his *soutane* and bands, pointing at his white limbs and yellow hair—or, what amazed them even more, Estelle's light, flaxen locks, which hung soaked around her. She felt a hand pulling them to see whether anything so strange actually grew on her head, and she turned round to confront them with a little gesture of defiant dignity that evidently awed them, for they kept their hands off her, and did not interfere as she stood sentry over her poor, shivering uncle.

Lanty was by this time trying to drag Victorine over the rocks and through the water. The poor Parisienne was very helpless, falling, hurting herself, and screaming continually; and trebly, when a couple of natives seized upon her and dragged her ashore, where they immediately snatched away her mantle and cap, pulled off her gold chain and cross, and tore out her earrings with howls of delight.

Lanty, struggling on, was likewise pounced upon, and bereft of his fine green-and-gold livery coat and waistcoat, which, though by no means his best, and stained with the sea water, were grasped with ecstasy, quarreled over, and displayed in triumph. The steward had secured a rope, by which he likewise reached the shore, only to become the prey of the savages, who instantly made prize of his watch and purse, as well as of almost all his garments. The five unfortunate survivors would fain have remained huddled together, but the natives, pointing to some huts on the hillside, urged them thither by the language of shouts and blows.

"Faith, and I'm not an ox," exclaimed Lanty, as if the fellow could have understood him, "and is it to the shambles you're driving me?"

"Best not resist! There's nothing for it but to obey them," said the steward, "and at least there will be shelter for the child."

No objection was made to his lifting her in his arms, and he carried her, as the party, half-drowned, nearly starved and exhausted, stumbled on along the rocky paths which cut their feet cruelly, since their shoes had all been taken from them. Lanty gave what help he could to the abbe and Victorine, who were both in a miserable plight, but ere long he was obliged to take his turn in carrying

Estelle, whose weight had become too much for the worn-out Hebert.

He was alarmed to find, on transferring her, that her head sunk on his shoulder as if in a sleep of exhaustion, which, however, shielded her from much terror. For, as they arrived at a cluster of five or six huts, built of clay and the branches of trees, out rushed a host of women, children, and large, fierce dogs, all making as much noise as they were capable of. The dogs flew at the strange white forms, no doubt utterly new to them. Victorine was severely bitten, and Lanty, trying to rescue her, had his leg torn.

These two were driven into one hut; Estelle, who was evidently considered as the greatest prize, was taken into another and rather better one, together with the steward and the abbe. The Moors who had swum ashore had probably told them that she was the Frankish bey's daughter; for this, miserable place though it was, appeared to be the best hut in the hamlet, nor was she deprived of her clothes. A sort of bournous or haik, of coarse texture, and very dirty, was given to each of the others, and some rye cakes baked in the ashes. Poor little Estelle turned away her head at first, but Hebert, alarmed at her shivering in her wet clothes, contrived to make her swallow a little, and then took off the soaked dress, and wrapped her in the bournous. She was by this time almost unconscious from weariness, and made no resistance to the unaccustomed hands, or the disgusting coarseness and uncleanness of her wrapper, but dropped asleep the moment he laid her down, and he applied himself to trying to dry her clothes at a little fire of sticks that had been lighted outside the open space, round which the huts stood.

The abbe, too, had fallen asleep, as Hebert managed to assure poor Lanty, who rushed out of the other hut, nearly naked, and bloodstained in many places, but more concerned at his separation from his foster-brother than at anything else that had befallen him. Men, women, children, and dogs were all after him, supposing him to be trying to escape, and he was seized upon and dragged back by main force, but not before the steward had called out:

"Monsieur l'Abbe sleeps—sleeps sound—he is not hurt! For Heaven's sake, Laurent, be quiet; do not enrage them! It is the only hope for him, as for mademoiselle and the rest of us."

Lanty, on hearing of the abbe's safety, allowed himself to be taken back, making himself, however, a passive dead weight on his captor's hands.

"Arrah," he muttered to himself, "if ye will have me, ye shall have the throuble of me, bad luck to you. 'Tis

little like ye are to the barbarous people St. Paul was thrown with; but then, what right have I to expect the treatment of a holy man, the like of him? If so be I can save that poor orphan that's left, and bring off Master Phelim safe, and save poor Victorine from being taken for some dirty spalpeen's wife, when he has half a dozen more to the fore—'tis little it matters what becomes of Lanty Callaghan; they might give him to their big brutes of dogs, and mighty lean meat they would find him!"

So came down the first night upon the captives.

CHAPTER V.

CAPTIVITY.

"Hold fast thy hope and Heaven will not
Forsake thee in thine hour.
Good angels will be near thee,
And evil ones will fear thee,
And Faith will give thee power."

Southey.

THE whole northern coast of Africa is inhabited by a medley of tribes, all owning a kind of subjection to the sultan, but more in the sense of pope than of king. The part of the coast where the tartan had been driven on the rocks was beneath Mount Araz, a spur of the Atlas, and was in the possession of the Arab tribe called Cabeleyze, which is said to mean "the revolted." The revolt had been from the Algerine power, which had never been able to pursue them into the fastnesses of the mountains, and they remained a wild, independent race, following all those Ishmaelite traditions and customs that are innate in the blood blood of the Arab.

When Estelle awoke from her long sleep of exhaustion she was conscious of a stifling atmosphere, and, moreover, of the crow of a cock in her immediate vicinity, then of a dog growling, and a lamb beginning to bleat. She raised herself a little, and beheld, lying on the ground around her, dark heaps with human feet protruding from them. These were interspersed with sheep, goats, dogs, and fowls, all seen by the yellow light of the rising sun, which made its way in, not only through the doorless aperture, but through the reeds and branches which formed the walls.

Close as the air was, she felt the chill of the morning and shivered. At the same moment she perceived poor Maitre Hebert covering himself as best he could with a dirty brown garment, and bending over her with much solicitude, but making signs to make as little noise as possible, while he whispered, "How goes it with mademoiselle?"

"Ah," said Estelle, recollecting herself, "we are ship-

wrecked. We shall have to confess our faith! Where are the rest?"

"There is Monsieur l'Abbe," said Hebert, pointing to a white pair of the bare feet. "Poor Laurent and Victorine have been carried elsewhere."

"And mamma? And my brother?"

"Ah! mademoiselle, give the good God thanks that he has spared them our trial."

"Mamma! Ah, she was in the cabin when the water came in? But my brother! I had hold of his hand, he came out with me. I saw Monsieur Arture swim away with him. Yes, Maitre Hebert, indeed I did."

Hebert had not the least hope that they could be saved, but he would not grieve the child by saying so, and his present object was to get her dressed before any one was awake to watch, and perhaps appropriate her upper garments. He was a fatherly old man, and she let him help her with her fastenings, and comb out her hair with the tiny comb in her *etui*. Indeed, *friseurs* were the rule in France, and she was not unused to male attendants at the toilet, so that she was not shocked at being left to his care.

For the rest, the child had always dwelt in an imaginary world, a curious compound of the Lives of the Saints and of Telemaque. Martyrs and heroes alike had been shipwrecked, taken captive, and tormented; and there was a certain sense of realized day-dreams about her, as if she had become one of the number and must act up to her part. She asked Hebert if there were a Saint Estelle, what was the day of the month, and if she should be placed in the calendar if she never complained, do what these barbarians might to her. She hoped she would hold out, for she would like to be able to help all whom she loved, poor papa and all. But it was hard that mamma, who was so good, could not be a martyr too; but she was a saint in Paradise all the same, and thus Estelle made her little prayer in hope. There was no conceit or over-confidence in the tone, though, of course, the poor child little knew what she was ready to accept; but it was a spark of the martyr's trust that gleamed in her eye, and gave her a sense of exaltation that took off the sharpest edge of grief and fear.

By this time, however, the animals were stirring, and with them the human beings who had lain down in their clothes. Peace was over; the abbe awoke, and began to call for Laurent and his clothes and his beads; but this aroused the master of the house, who started up, and, threatening with a huge stick, roared at him what must have been orders to be quiet.

Estelle indignantly flew between and cried, "You shall not hurt my uncle."

The commanding gesture spoke for itself; and, besides, poor Phelim cowered behind her with an air that caused a word and sign to pass round, which the captives found was equivalent to innocent or imbecile; and the Mohammedan respect and tenderness for the demented spared him all further violence or molestation, except that he was lost and miserable without the attentions of his foster-brother; and indeed the shocks he had undergone seemed to have robbed him of much of the small degree of sense he had once possessed.

Coming into the space before the doorway, Estelle found herself the object of universal gaze and astonishment, as her long, fair hair gleamed in the sunshine, every one coming to touch it, and even pull it to see if it were real. She was a good deal frightened, but too high-spirited to show it more than she could help, as the dark-skinned, bearded men crowded round with cries of wonder. The other two prisoners likewise appeared; Victorine looking wretchedly ill, and hardly able to hold up her head; Lanty creeping toward the abbe, and trying to arrange his remnant of clothing. There was a short respite, while the Arabs, all turning eastward, chanted their morning devotions with a solemnity that struck their captives.

The scene was a fine one, if there had been any heart to admire. The huts were placed on the verge of a fine forest of chestnut and oak trees, and beyond towered up mountain-peaks in every variety of dazzling color—red and purple beneath, glowing red and gold where the snowy peaks caught the morning sun, lately broken from behind them. The slopes around were covered with rich grass, flourishing after the summer heats, and to which the herds were now betaking themselves, excepting such as were detained to be milked by the women, who came pouring out of some of the other huts in dark-blue garments; and in front, still shadowed by the mountain, lay the bay, deep, beautiful, pellucid green near the land, and shut in by fantastic and picturesque rocks—some bare, some cloathed with splendid foliage, winter though it was—while beyond lay the exquisite blue stretching to the horizon. Little recked the poor prisoners of the scene so fair; they only saw the remnant of the wreck below, the sea that parted them from hope, the savage rocks behind, the barbarous people around, the squalor and dirt of the adowara, as the hamlet was called.

Comparatively, the Moor who had swum ashore to reconnoiter seemed like a friend when he came forward and saluted Estelle and the abbe respectfully. Moreover, the *lingua Franca* Lanty had picked up established a very im-

perfect double system of interpretation by the help of many gestures. This was Lanty's explanation of the rest: in French, of course, but, like all his speech, Irish-English in construction.

"This Moor, Hassan, wants to stand our friend in his own fashion, but he says they care not the value of an empty mussel shell for the French, and no more for the Dey of Algiers than I do for the Elector of Hanover. He has told them that Monsieur l'Abbe and mademoiselle are brother and daughter to a great bey—but it is little they care for that. Holy Virgin, they took mademoiselle for a boy! That is why they are gazing at her so impudently. Would that I could give them a taste of my cane! Do you see those broken walls, and a bit of a castle on yonder headland jutting out into the sea? They are bidding Hassan say that the French built that, and garrisoned it with the help of the dey; but there fell out a war, and these fellows or their fathers, surprised it, sacked it, and carried off four hundred prisoners into slavery. Holy Mother defend us! Here are all the rogues coming to see what they will do with us!"

For the open space in front of the huts, whence all the animals had now been driven, was becoming thronged with figures with the haik laid over their heads, spear or blunderbuss in hand, fine-bearing, and sometimes truculent, though handsome, brown countenances. They gazed at the captives, and uttered what sounded like loud hurrahs or shouts; but after listening to Hassan, Lanty turned round trembling. "The miserables! Some are for sacrificing us outright on the spot, but this decent man declares that he will make them sensible that their prophet was not out-and-out as bad as that. Never you fear, mademoiselle."

"I am not afraid," said Estelle, drawing up her head. "We shall be martyrs."

Lanty was engaged in listening to a moan from his foster-brother for food, and Hebert joined in observing that they might as well be sacrificed as starved to death; whereupon the Irishman's words and gesticulations induced the Moor to make representations which resulted in some dry pieces of *samh* cake, a few dates, and a gourd of water being brought by one of the women; a scanty amount for the number, even though poor Victorine was too ill to touch anything but the water; while the abbe seemed unable to understand that the servants durst not demand anything better, and devoured her share and a quarter of Lanty's as well as his own. Meantime the Cabeleyzes had all ranged themselves in rows, cross-legged, on the ground, opposite to the five unfortunate captives, to sit in judgment on them.

As they kept together in one group, happily in the shade of a hut, Victorine, too faint and sick fully to know what was going on, lay with her head on the lap of her young mistress, who sat with her bright and strangely-fearless eyes confronting the wild figures opposite.

Her uncle, frightened, though not comprehending the extent of his danger, crouched behind Lanty, who with Hebert stood somewhat in advance, the would-be guardians of the more helpless ones.

There was an immense amount of deafening shrieking and gesticulating among the Arabs. Hassan was responding, and finally turned to Lanty, when the anxious watchers could perceive signs as if of paying down coin made interrogatively. "Promise them anything, everything," cried Hebert; "Monsieur le Comte would give his last sou—so would Madame la Marquise—to save mademoisIle."

"I have told him so," said Laurence, presently; "I bade him let them know it is little they can make of us, specially now they have stripped us as bare as themselves, the rascals! but that their fortunes would be made—and little they would know what to do with them—if they would only send Monsieur l'Abbe and mademoiselle to Algiers safe and sound. There! he is trying to incense them. Never fear, Master Phelim dear, there never was a rogue yet, black or white, or the color of poor madame's frothed chocolate, who did not love gold better than blood, unless, indeed, 'twas for the sweet morsel of revenge; and these, for all their rolling eyes and screeching tongues, have not the ghost of a quarrel with us."

"My beads, my breviary," sighed the abbe. "Get them for me, Lanty."

"I wish they would end it quickly," said Estelle. "My head aches so, and I want to be with mamma. Poor Victorine! yours is worse," she added, and soaked her handkerchief in the few drops of water left in the gourd to lay it on the maid's forehead.

The howling and shrieking betokened consultation, but was suddenly interrupted by some half-grown lads, who came running in with their hands full of what Lanty recognized to his horror as garments worn by his mistress and fellow-servants, also a big kettle and a handspike. They pointed down to the sea, and with yells of haste and exultation all the wild conclave started up to snatch, handle, and examine, then began rushing headlong to the beach. Hassan's explanations were scarcely needed to show that they were about to ransack the ship, and he evidently took credit to himself for having induced them to spare the prisoners in case their assistance should be requisite to gain full possession of the plunder.

Estelle and Victorine were committed to the charge of a forbidding-looking old hag, the mother of the sheik of the party; the abbe was allowed to stray about as he pleased, but the two men were driven to the shore by the eloquence of the club. Victorine revived enough for a burst of tears and a sobbing cry, "Oh, they will be killed! We shall never see them again!"

"No," said Estelle, with her quiet yet childlike resolution, "they are not going to kill any of us yet. They said so. You are so tired, poor Victorine! Now all the hubbub is over, suppose you lie still and sleep. My uncle," as he roamed round her, mourning for his rosary, "I am afraid your beads are lost; but see here, these little round seeds, I can pierce them if you will gather some more for me, and make you another set. See, these will be the aves, and here are shells in the glass for the paters."

The long fiber of glass served for the string, and the sight of the Giaour girl's employment brought round her all the female population who had not repaired to the coast. Her first rosary was torn from her to adorn an almost naked baby; but the abbe began to whimper, and to her surprise the mother restored it to him. She then made signs that she would construct another necklace for the child, and she was rewarded by a gourd being brought to her full of milk, which she was able to share with her two companions, and which did something to revive poor Victorine. Estelle was kept threading these necklaces and bracelets all the wakeful hours of the day—for every one fell asleep about noon—though still so jealous a watch was kept on her that she was hardly allowed to shift her position to get out of the sun, which even at that season was distressingly scorching in the middle of the day.

Parties were continually coming up from the beach laden with spoils of all kinds from the wreck, Lanty, Hebert, and a couple of negroes being driven up repeatedly, so heavily burdened as to be almost bent double. All was thrown down in a heap at the other end of the adowara, and the old sheik kept guard over it, allowing no one to touch it. This went on till darkness was coming on, when, while the cattle were being collected for the night, the prisoners were allowed an interval, in which Hebert and Lanty told how the natives, swimming like ducks, had torn everything out of the wreck; all the bales and boxes that poor Maitre Hebert had secured with so much care, and many of which he was now forced himself to open for the pleasure of these barbarians.

That, however, was not the worst. Hebert concealed from his little lady what Lanty did not spare Victorine. "And there—enough to melt the heart of a stone—there

lay on the beach poor Madame la Comtesse, and all the three. Good was it for you, Victorine, my jewel, that you were not in the cabin with them."

"I know not," said the dejected Victorine; "they are better off than we!"

"You would not say so if you had seen what I have," said Lanty, shuddering. "The dogs!—they cut off madame's poor white fingers to get at her rings, and not with knives, either, lest her blessed flesh should defile them, they said, and her poor face was an angel's all the time. Nay, nor that was not the worst. The villainous boys, what must they do but pelt the poor, swollen bodies with stones! Ay, well you may scream, Victorine. We went down on our knees, Maitre Hebert and I, to pray they might let us give them burial, but they mocked us, and bade Hassan say they never bury dogs. I went round the steeper path, for all the load at my back, or I should have been flying at the throats of the cowardly vultures, and then what would have become of Monsieur l'Abbe?"

Victorine trembled and wept bitterly for her companions, and then asked if Lanty had seen the corpse of the little chevalier.

"Not a sight of him or Monsieur Arthur, either," returned Lanty; "only the ugly face of the old Turk captain and another of his crew, and them they buried decently, being Moslem hounds like themselves; while my poor lady that is a saint in heaven——" and he, too, shed tears of hot grief and indignation, recovering enough to warn Victorine by no means to let the poor young girl know of this additional horror.

There was little opportunity, for they had been appropriated by different masters: Estelle, the abbe, and Hebert to the sheik, or head man of the clan; and Lanty and Victorine to a big, strong, fierce-looking fellow, of inferior degree but greater might.

This time Estelle was to be kept for the night among the sheik's women, who, though too unsophisticated to veil their faces, had a part of the hut closed off with a screen of reeds, but quite as bare as the outside. Hebert, who could not endure to think of her sleeping on the ground, and saw a large heap of grass or straw provided for a little brown cow, endeavored to take an armful for her. Unluckily, it belonged to Lanty's master, Eyoub, who instantly flew at him in a fury, dragged him to a log of wood, caught up an ax, and had not Estelle's screams brought up the sheik, with Hassan and one or two other men, the poor *maitre d'hotel's* head would have been off. There was a sharp altercation between the sheik and Eyoub, while Estelle held the faithful servant's hand, say-

ing: "You did it for me! Oh, Hebert, do not make them angry again. It would be beautiful to die for one's faith, but not for a handful of hay."

"Ah! my dear demoiselle, what would my poor ladies say to see you sleeping on the bare ground in a filthy hut?"

"I slept well last night," returned Estelle; "indeed, I do not mind! It is only the more like the dungeon at Lyons, you know! And I pray you, Hebert, do not get yourself killed for nothing too soon, or else we shall not all stand out and confess together, like St Blandina and St. Ponticus and St. Epagathius."

"Alas, the dear child! The long names run off her tongue as glibly as ever," sighed Hebert, who, though determined not to forsake his faith, by no means partook of her enthusiasm for martyrdom. Hassan, however, having explained what the purpose had been, Hebert was pardoned though the sheik scornfully observed that what was good enough for the daughters of a Hadji was good enough for the unclean child of the Frankish infidels.

The hay might perhaps have spared a little stiffness, but it would not have ameliorated the chief annoyances—the closeness, the dirt, and the vermin. It was well that it was winter, or the first of these would have been far worse, and, fortunately for Estelle, she was one of those whom suffocating air rather lulls than rouses.

Eyoub's hovel did not rejoice in the refinement of a partition, but his family, together with their animals, lay on the rocky floor as best they might; and Victorine's fever came on again, so that she lay in great misery, greeted by a growl from a great white dog whenever she tried to relieve her restless, aching limbs by the slightest movement, or to reach one of the gourds of water laid near the sleepers, like Saul's cruse at his pillow.

Toward morning, however, Lanty, who had been sitting with his back against the wall, awoke from the sleep well earned by acting as a beast of burden. The dog growled a little, but Lanty—though his leg still showed its teeth-marks—had made friends with it, and his hand on its head quieted it directly, so that he was able cautiously to hand a gourd to Victorine. The Arabs were heavy sleepers, and the two were able to talk under their breath; as in reply to a kind word from Lanty, poor Victorine moaned her envy of the fate of Rosette and Babette; and he, with something of their little mistress' spirit, declared that he had no doubt but that "one way or the other they should be out of it; either get safe home, or be blessed martyrs, without even a taste of purgatory."

"Ah! but there's worse for me," sighed Victorine. "This

demon brought another to stare in my face—I know he wants to make me his wife! Kill me first, Laurent."

"It is I that would rather espouse you, my jewel," returned a tender whisper.

"How can you talk of such things at such a moment?"

"'Tis a pity Monsieur l'Abbe is not a priest," sighed Lanty. "But, you know, Victorine, who is the boy you always meant to take."

"You need not be so sure of that," she said, the coy coquetry not quite extinct.

"Come, as you said, it is no time for fooling. Give me your word and troth to be my wife so soon as we have the good luck to come by a Christian priest by our Lady's help, and I'll outface them all—were it Mohammed the prophet himself, that you are my espoused and betrothed, and woe to him that puts a finger on you."

"You would only get yourself killed."

"And would not I be proud to be killed for your sake? Besides, I'll show them cause not to kill me if I have the chance. Trust me, Victorine, my darling—it is but a chance among these murdering villains, but it is the only one; and, sure, if you pretended to turn the back of your hand to me when there were plenty of Christian men to compliment you, yet you would rather have poor Lanty than a thundering rogue of a pagan Mohammedan."

"I hope I shall die," sighed poor Victorine, faintly. "It will only be your death!"

"That is my affair," responded Lanty. "Come, here's daylight coming in; reach me your hand before this *canaille* wakes, and here's this good beast of a dog, and yonder grave old goat with a face like Pere Michel's for our witnesses—and by good luck here's a bit of gilt wire off my shoulder-knot that I've made into a couple of rings while I've been speaking."

The strange betrothal had barely taken place before there was a stir, and what was no doubt a yelling imprecation of the "dog Giaours" for the noise they made.

The morning began as before, with the exception that Estelle had established a certain understanding with a little chocolate-colored cupid of a boy of the size of her brother, and his lesser sister, by letting them stroke her hair, and showing them the mysteries of cat's-cradle. They shared their gourd of goat's-milk with her, but would not let her give any to her companions. However, the abbe had only to hold out his hand to be fed, and the others were far too anxious to care much about their food.

A much larger number of Cabeleyzes came streaming into the forum of the adowara, and the prisoners were all again placed in a row, while the new comers passed before

them, staring hard, and manifestly making personal remarks which perhaps it was well that they did not understand. The sheik and Eyoub evidently regarded them as private property, stood in front, and permitted nobody to handle them, which was so far a comfort.

Then followed a sort of council, with much gesticulation, in which Hassan took his share. Then, followed by the sheik, Eyoub, and some other headmen, he advanced, and demanded that the captives should become true believers. This was eked out with gestures betokening that they would be free in that case; while, if they refused, the sword and the smoldering flame were pointed to, while the whole host loudly shouted "Islam!"

Victorine trembled, sobbed, tried to hide herself; but Estelle stood up, her young face lighted up, her dark eyes gleaming, as if she were realizing a day-dream, as she shook her head, cried out to Lanty, "Tell him, no—never!" and held to her breast a little cross of sticks that she had been forming to complete her uncle's rosary. Her gesture was understood. A man better clad than the rest, with a turban and a broad crimson sash, rushed up to her, seized her by the hair, and waved his cimeter over her head. The child felt herself close to her mother. She looked up in his face with radiant eyes and a smile on her lips. It absolutely daunted the fellow; his arm dropped, and he gazed at her as at some supernatural creature; and the sheik, enraged at the interference with his property, darted forth to defend it, and there was a general wrangling.

Seconded by their interpreter, Hassan, who knew that the Koran did not prescribe the destruction of Christians, Hebert and Lanty endeavored to show that their conversion was out of the question, and that their slaughter would only be the loss of an exceedingly valuable ransom, which would be paid if they were handed over safe and sound and in good condition.

There was no knowing what was the effect of this, for the council again ended in a rush to secure the remaining pillage of the wreck. Hebert and Lanty dreaded what they might see, but to their great relief those poor remains had disappeared. They shuddered as they remembered the hyenas' laughs and the jackals' howls they had heard at nightfall; but though they hoped that the sea had been merciful, they could even have been grateful to the animals that had spared them the sight of conscious insults.

The wreck was finally cleared, and among the fragments were found several portions of books. These the Arabs disregarded, being too ignorant even to read their own Koran, and yet aware of the Mohammedan scruple which

forbids the destruction of any scrap of paper lest it should bear the name of Allah. Lanty secured the greater part of the abbe's breviary, and a good many pages of Estelle's beloved Telemaque; while the steward gained possession of his writing-case, and was permitted to retain it when the Cabeleyzes, glutted with plunder, had ascertained that it contained nothing of value to them.

After everything had been dragged up to the adowara there ensued a sort of auction or division of the plunder. Poor Maitre Hebert was doomed to see the boxes and bales he had so diligently watched broken open by these barbarians—nay, he had to assist in their own dissection when the secrets were too much for the Arabs. There was the King of Spain's portrait rent from its costly setting and stamped upon as an idolatorous image. The miniature of the count, worn by the poor lady, had previously shared the same fate, but that happily was out of sight and knowledge. Here was the splendid plate, presented by crowned heads, howled over by savages ignorant of its use. The silver they seemed to value; but there were three precious gold cups which the salt water had discolored, so that they were taken for copper and sold for a very small price to a Jew, who somehow was attracted to the scene, "like a raven to the slaughter," said Lanty.

This man likewise secured some of the poor lady's store of rich dresses, but a good many more were appropriated to make sashes for the men, and the smaller articles, including stockings, were wound turban-fashion round the children's heads.

Lanty could not help observing: "And if the saints are merciful to us, and get us out of this, we shall have stories to tell that will last our lives!" as he watched the solemn old chief smelling at the perfumes, swallowing the *rouge* as splendid medicine, and finally fingering a snuff-box, while half a dozen more crowded round to assist in the opening, and in another moment sneezing, weeping, tingling, dancing frantically about, vituperating the Christian's magic.

This gave Lanty an idea. A little round box lay near, which, as he remembered, contained a Jack-in-the-box, or Polichinelle, which the poor little chevalier had bought at the fair in Tarascon. This he contrived to secrete and hand to Victorine. "Keep the secret," he said, "and you will find your best guardian in that bit of a box. And when, that very evening, an Arab showed some intentions of adding her to his harem, Victorine bethought herself of the box, and unhooked in desperation. Up sprung Punch, long-nosed and fur-capped, right in the bearded face.

Back the man almost fell; "Shaitan, Shaitan!" was the

cry, as the inhabitants tumbled pell-mell out of the hovel, and Victorine and Punch remained masters of the situation.

She heard Lanty haranguing in broken Arabic and *lingua Franca*, and presently he came in, shaking with suppressed laughter. "If ever we get home," said he, "we'll make a pilgrimage to Tarascon! Blessings on good St. Martha that put that sweet little imp in my way! The rogues think he is the very genie that the fishermen let out of the bottle in mademoiselle's book of the "Thousand and One Nights," and thought to see him towering over the whole place. And a fine figure he would be, with his hook nose and long beard. They sent me to beg you fairly to put up your little Shaitan again. I told them that Shaitan, as they call him, is always in it when there's meddling between an espoused pair—which is as true as though the holy father at Rome had said it—and as long as they were civil, Shaitan would rest; but if they durst molest you, there was no saying where he would be, if once you had to let him out! To think of the virtue of that ugly face and bit of a coil of wire!"

Meantime Hebert, having ascertained that both the Jew and Hassan were going away, the one to Constantina, the other to Algiers, wrote, and so did Estelle, to the consul at Algiers, explaining their position and entreating to be ransomed. Though only nine years old, Estelle could write a very fair letter, and the amazement of the Arabs was unbounded that any female creature should wield a pen. Marabouts and merchants were known to read the Koran, but if one of the goats had begun to write, their wonder could hardly have been greater; and such crowds came to witness the extraordinary operation that she could scarcely breathe or see.

It seemed to establish her in their estimation as a sort of supernatural being, for she was always treated with more consideration than the rest of the captives, never deprived of the clothes she wore, and allowed to appropriate a few of the toilet necessaries that were quite incomprehensible to those around her.

She learned the names for bread, chestnuts, dates, milk, and water, and these were never denied to her; and her little ingenuities in nursery games won the good will of the women and children around her, though others used to come and make ugly faces at her, and cry out at her as an unclean thing. The abbe was allowed to wander about at will, and keep his hours, with Estelle to make the responses, and sometimes Hebert. He was the only one that might visit the other two captives; Lanty was kept hard at work over the crop of chestnuts that the clan had come down

from their mountains to gather in; and poor Victorine, who was consumed by a low fever, and almost too weak to move, lay all day in the dreary and dirty hut, expecting, but dreading death.

Some days later there was great excitement, shouting, and rage. It proved the Bey of Constantina had sent to demand the party, threatening to send an armed force to compel their surrender; but, alas! the hope of a return to comparative civilization was instantly quashed, for the sheik showed himself furious. He and Eyoub stood brandishing their cimeters, and with eyes flashing like a panther's in the dark, declaring that they were free, no subjects of the dey nor the bey either; and that they would shed the blood of every one of the captives rather than yield them to the dogs and sons of dogs at Constantina.

This embassy only increased the jealousy with which the prisoners were guarded. None of them were allowed to stir without a man with a halberd, and they had the greatest difficulty in intrusting a third letter to the Moor in command of the party. Indeed, it was only managed by Estelle's coaxing of the little Abou Daoud, who was growing devoted to her, and would do anything for the reward of hearing her sing "Malbrook s'en va-t'-en guerre."

It might have been in consequence of this threat of the bey, much as they affected to despise it, that the Cabeleyzes prepared to return to the heights of Mount Araz, whence they had only descended during the autumn to find fresh pasture for their cattle, and to collect dates and chestnuts from the forest.

"Alas!" said Hebert, "this is worse than ever. As long as we were near the sea I had hope, but now all trace of us will be lost, even if the consul should send after us."

"Never fear, Maitre Hebert," said Estelle; "you know Telemaque was a prisoner, and tamed the wild peasants in Egypt."

"Ah! the poor demoiselle, she always seems as if she were acting a comedy."

This was happily true. Estelle seemed to be in a curious manner borne through the dangers and discomforts of her surroundings by a strange, dreamy sense of living up to her part, sometimes as a possible martyr, sometimes as a figure in the mythological or Arcadian romance that had filtered into her nursery.

CHAPTER VI.

A MOORISH VILLAGE.

"Our laws and our worship on thee thou shalt take,
And this shalt thou first do for Zulema's sake." *Scott.*

WHEN Arthur Hope dashed back from the party on the prow of the wrecked tartan in search of little Ulysse, he succeeded in grasping the child, but at the same moment a huge breaker washed him off the slippery, sloping deck, and after a scarce conscious struggle he found himself, still retaining his clutch on the boy, in the trough between it and another. He was happily an expert swimmer, and holding the little fellow's clothes in his teeth, he was able to avoid the dash, and to rise on another wave. Then he perceived that he was no longer near the vessel, but had been carried out to some little distance, and his efforts only succeeded in keeping afloat, not in approaching the shore. Happily a plank drifted so near him that he was able to seize it and throw himself across it, thus obtaining some support, and being able to raise the child further above the water.

At the same time he became convinced that a strong current, probably from a river or stream, was carrying him out to sea, away from the bay. He saw the black heads of two or three of the Moorish crew likewise floating on spars, and yielding themselves to the stream, and this made him better satisfied to follow their example. It was a sort of rest, and gave him time to recover from the first exhaustion, to convince himself that the little boy was not dead, and to lash him to the plank with a handkerchief.

By and by—he knew not how soon—calls and shouts passed between the Moors; only two seemed to survive, and they no longer obeyed the direction of the current, but turned resolutely toward the land, where Arthur dimly saw a green valley opening toward the sea. This was a much severer effort, but by this time immediate self-preservation had become the only thought, and happily both wind and the very slight tide were favorable, so that, just as the sun sank beneath the western waves, Arthur felt foothold on a sloping beach of white sand, even as his powers became exhausted. He struggled up out of reach of the sea, and then sank down, exhausted and unconscious.

His first impression was of cries and shrieks round him, as he gasped and panted, then saw as in a dream forms flitting round him, and then—feeling for the child and missing him—he raised himself in consternation, and the

movement was greeted by fresh unintelligible exclamations, while a not unkindly hand lifted him up. It belonged to a man in a sort of loose white garment and drawers, with a thin, dark-bearded face; and Arthur, recollecting that the Spanish word *nino* passed current for child in *lingua Franca*, uttered it with an accent of despairing anxiety. He was answered with a volley of words that he only understood to be in a consoling tone, and the speaker pointed inland.

Various persons, among whom Arthur saw his recent shipmates, seemed to be going in that direction, and he obeyed his guide, though scarcely able to move from exhaustion and cold, the garments he had retained clinging about him. Some one, however, ran down toward him with a vessel containing a draught of sour milk. This revived him enough to see clearly and follow his guides. After walking a distance, which appeared to him most laborious, he found himself entering a sort of village, and was ushered through a courtyard into a kind of room. In the center a fire was burning; several figures were busy round it, and in another moment he perceived that they were rubbing, chafing, and otherwise restoring his little companion.

Indeed, Ulysse had just recovered enough to be terribly frightened, and as his friend's voice answered his screams he sprung from the kind brown hands, and, darting on Arthur, clung to him with face hidden on his shoulder. The women who had been attending to him fell back as the white stranger entered, and almost instantly dry clothes were brought, and while Arthur was warming himself and putting them on, a little table about a foot high was set, the contents of a caldron of a kind of soup which had been suspended over the fire were poured into a large round green crock, and in which all were expected to dip their spoons and fingers.

Little Ulysse was exceedingly amazed, and observed that *ces gens* were not *bien eleves* to eat out of the dish; but he was too hungry to make any objection to being fed with the wooden spoon that had been handed to Arthur; and when the warm soup and the meat floating in it had refreshed them, signs were made to them to lie down on a mat within an open door, and both were worn out enough to sleep soundly.

It was daylight when Arthur was awakened by poor little Ulysse sitting up and crying out for his *bonne*, his mother and sister, "Oh! take me to them," he cried; "I do not like this dark place."

For dark the room was, being windowless, though the golden sunlight could be seen beyond the open doorway,

which was under a sort of cloister or veranda overhung by some climbing plant. Arthur, collecting himself, reminded the child how the waves had borne them away from the rest, with earnest, soothing promises of care, and endeavoring to to get back to the rest. "Say your prayers that God will take care of you and bring you back to your sister," Arthur added, for he did not think it possible that the child's mother should have been saved from the waves; and his heart throbbed at thoughts of his promise to the poor lady.

"But I want my *bonne*," sighed Ulysse; "I want my clothes. This is an ugly *robe de nuit*, and there is no bed."

"Perhaps we can find your clothes," said Arthur. "They were too wet to be kept on last night."

So they emerged into the court, which had a kind of farmyard appearance; women with rows of coins hanging over their brows were milking cows and goats, and there was a continuous confusion of sound of their voices and the lowing and bleating of cattle. At the appearance of Arthur and the boy there was a general shout, and people seemed to throng in to gaze at them, the men handsome, stately, and bearded, with white, full drawers, and a bournous laid so as first to form a flat hood over the head, and then belted in at the waist, with a more or less handsome sash, into which were stuck a spoon and knife, and in some cases one or two pistols. They did not seem ill-disposed, though their language was perfectly incomprehensible. Ulysse's clothes were lying dried by the hearth, and no objection was made to his resuming them. Arthur made gestures of washing or bathing, and was conducted outside the court, to a little stream of pure water descending rapidly to the sea. It was so cold that Ulysse screamed at the touch, as Arthur, with more spectators than he could have desired, did his best to perform their toilets. He had divested himself of most of his own garments for the convenience of swimming, but his pockets were left and a comb in them; and, though poor Mademoiselle Julienne would have been shocked at the result of his efforts, and the little silken laced suit was sadly tarnished with sea-water, Ulysse became such an astonishing sight that the children danced round him, the women screamed with wonder, and the men said "Mashallah!" The young Scotchman's height was perhaps equally amazing, for he saw them pointing up to his head as if measuring his stature.

He saw that he was in a village of low houses, with walls of unhewn stone, inclosing yards, and set in the midst of fruit-trees and gardens. Though so far on in the autumn there was a rich, luxuriant appearance; roots and fruits, corn and flax, were laid out to dry, and girls and boys were driving the cattle out to pasture. He could not

doubt that he had landed among a settled and not utterly uncivilized people, but he was too spent and weary to exert himself, or even to care for much beyond present safety; and had no sooner returned to his former quarters, and shared with Ulysse a bowl of curds, than they both fell asleep again in the shade of the gourd plant trained on a trellised roof over the wall.

When he next awoke, Ulysse was very happily at play with some little brown children, as if the sports of childhood defied the curse of Babel, and a sailor from the tartan was being greeted by the master of the house. Arthur hoped that some communication would now be possible, but, unfortunately, the man knew very little of the *lingua Franca* of the Mediterranean, and Arthur knew still less. However, he made out that he was the only one of the shipwrecked crew who had managed to reach the land, and that this was a village of Moors—settled, agricultural Moors, not Arabs, good Moslems—who would do him no harm. This, and he pointed to a fine-looking elderly man, was the sheik of the village, Abou Ben Zegri, and if the young Giaours would conform to the true faith all would be *salem* with them.

Arthur shook his head, and tried by word and sign to indicate his anxiety for the rest of his companions. The sailor threw up his hands and pointed toward the sea, to show that he believed them to be all lost; but Arthur insisted that five—marking them off on his fingers—were on *gebal*, a rock, and emphatically indicated his desire of reaching them. The Moor returned the word "Cabeleyzes," with gestures signifying throat-cutting and slavery; also that these present hosts regarded them as banditti. How far off they were it was not possible to make out, for of course Arthur's own sensations were no guide; but he knew that the wreck had taken place early in the afternoon, and that he had come on shore in the dusk, which was then at about five o'clock. There was certainly a promontory, made by the ridge of a hill, and also a river between him and any survivors there might be.

This was all that he could gather, and he was not sure of even this much, but he was still too much wearied and battered for any exertion of thought or even anxiety. Three days' tempest in a cockle-shell of a ship, and then three hours' tossing on a plank, had left him little but the desire of repose, and the Moors were merciful and let him alone. It was a beautiful place—that he already knew. A Scot, and used to the sea-coast, his eye felt at home as it ranged to the grand heights in the dim distance, with winter-caps of snow, and, shaded in the most gorgeous tints of coloring

forests beneath, slopes covered with the exquisite green of young wheat.

Autumn though it was, the orange-trees, laden with fruit, the cork-trees, ilexes, and fan-palms, gave plenty of greenery, shading the gardens with prickly-pear hedges; and though many of the fruit-trees had lost their leaves, fig, peach, olive, and mulberry, caper plants, vines with foliage of every tint of red and purple, which were trained over the trellised courts of the houses, made everything have a look of rural plenty and peace, most unlike all that Arthur had ever heard or imagined of the Moors, who, as he owned to himself, were certainly not all savage pirates and slave-drivers. The whole within was surrounded by a stone wall, with a deep, horseshoe-arched gateway, the fields and pastures lying beyond with some more slightly-walled inclosures meant for the protection of the flocks and herds at night.

He saw various arts going on. One man was working in iron over a little charcoal fire, with a boy to blow up his bellows, and several more were busied over some pottery, while the women alternated their grinding between two millstones, and other domestic cares, with spinning, weaving, and beautiful embroidery. To Arthur, who looked on, with no one to speak to except little Ulysse, it was strangely like seeing the life of the Israelites in the Old Testament when they dwelt under their own vines and fig-trees—like reading a chapter in the Bible, as he said to himself, as again and again he saw some allusion to Eastern customs illustrated.

He was still more struck—when, after the various herds of kine, sheep, and goats, with one camel, several asses, and a few slender-limbed Barbary horses had been driven in for the night—by the sight of the population, as the sun sunk behind the mountains, all suspending whatever they were about, spreading their prayer-carpets, turning eastward, performing their ablutions, and uttering their brief prayer with one voice so devoutly that he was almost struck with awe.

"Are they saying their prayers?" whispered Ulysse, startled by the instant change in his playfellows, and as Arthur acquiesced, "Then they are good."

"If it were the true faith," said Arthur, thinking of the wide difference between this little fellow and Estelle; but though not two years younger, Ulysse was far more childish than his sister, and when she was no longer present to lead him with her enthusiasm, sunk at once to his own level. He opened wide his eyes at Arthur's reply, and said, "I do not see their idols."

"They have none," said Arthur, who could not help

thinking that Ulysse might look nearer home for idols—but chiefly concerned at the moment to keep the child quiet, lest he should bring danger on them by interruption.

They were sitting in the embowered porch of the sheik's court when, a few seconds after the villagers had risen up from their prayer, they saw a figure enter at the village gateway, and the sheik rise and go forward. There were low bending in salutation, hands placed on the breast, then kisses exchanged, after which the Sheik Abou Ben Zegri went out with the stranger, and great excitement and pleasure seemed to prevail among the villagers, especially the women. Arthur heard the word "Yusuf" often repeated, and by the time darkness had fallen on the village the sheik ushered the guest into his court, bringing with him a donkey with some especially precious load—which was removed; after which the supper was served as before in the large, low apartment, with a handsomely tiled floor, and an opening in the roof for the issue of the smoke from the fire, which became agreeable in the evening at this season. Before supper, however, the stranger's feet and hands were washed by a black slave, in Eastern fashion; and then all, as before, sat on mats or cushions round the central bowl, each being furnished with a spoon and a thin, flat, soft piece of bread to dip into the mess of stewed kid, flakes of which might be extracted with the fingers.

The women, who had fastened a piece of linen across their faces, ran about and waited on the guests, who included three or four of the principal men of the village, as well as the stranger, who, as Arthur observed, was not of the uniform brown of the rest, but had some color in his cheeks, light eyes, and a ruddy beard, and also was of a larger frame than these Moors, who, though graceful, lithe, and exceedingly stately and dignified, hardly reached above young Hope's own shoulder. Conversation was going on all the time, and Arthur soon perceived that he was the subject of it. As soon as the meal was over the new-comer addressed him, to his great joy, in French. It was the worst French imaginable—perhaps more correctly *lingua Franca*, with a French instead of an Arabic foundation—but it was more comprehensible than that of the Moorish sailor, and bore some relation to a civilized language; besides which there was something indescribably familiar in the tone of voice, although Arthur's good French often missed of being comprehended.

"Son of a great man? Embassador, French!" The greatness seemed impressed, but whether embassador was understood was another thing, though it was accepted as relating to the boy.

"Secretary to the embassador," seemed to be an equal

problem. The man shook his head, but he took in better the story of the wreck, though, like the sailor, he shook his head over the chance of there being any survivors, and utterly negatived the idea of joining them. The great point that Arthur tried to impress was that there would be a very considerable ransom if the child could be conveyed to Algiers, and he endeavored to persuade the stranger, who was evidently a sort of traveling merchant, and, as he began to suspect, a renegade, to convey them thither; but he only got shakes of the head as answers, and something to the effect that they were a good deal out of the dey's reach in those parts, together with what he feared was an intimation that they were altogether in the power of Sheik Abou Ben Zegri.

They were interrupted by a servant of the merchant, who came to bring him some message as well as a pipe and tobacco. The pipe was carried by a negro boy, at sight of whom Ulysse gave a cry of ecstasy, "Juba! Juba! Grandmother's Juba! Why do not you speak to me?" as the little black, no bigger than Ulysse himself, grinned with all his white teeth, quite uncomprehending.

"Ah! my poor laddie" exclaimed Arthur in his native tongue, which he often used with the boy, "it is only another negro. You are far enough from home."

The words had an astonishing effect on the merchant. He turned round with the exclamation, "Ye'll be frae Scotland!"

"And so are you!" cried Arthur, holding out his hand.

"Tak tent, tak tent," said the merchant, hastily, yet with a certain hesitation, as though speaking a long, unfamiliar tongue. "The loons might jalouse our being overfriendly thegither."

Then he returned to the sheik, to whom he seemed to be making explanations, and presenting some of his tobacco, which probably was of a superior quality in preparation to what was grown in the village. They solemnly smoked together and conversed, while Arthur watched them anxiously, relieved that he had found an interpreter, but very doubtful whether a renegade could be a friend, even though he were indeed a fellow countryman.

It was not till several pipes had been consumed, and the village worthies had, with considerable ceremony, taken leave, that the merchant again spoke to Arthur. "I'll see ye the morn; I hae tell'd the sheik we are frae the same parts. Maybe I can serve you, if ye ken what's for your guid, but canna say mair the noo."

The sheik escorted him out of the court, for he slept in one of the two striped horse-hair tents which had been spread within the inclosures belonging to the village,

around which were tethered the mules and asses that carried his wares. Arthur meanwhile arranged his little charge for the night. He felt that among those enemies to their faith he must do what was in his power to keep up that of the child, and not allow his prayers to be neglected; but, not being able to repeat the Latin forms, and thinking them unprofitable to the boy himself, he prompted the saying of the Creed and Lord's Prayer in English, and caused them to be repeated after him, though very sleepily and imperfectly.

All the men of the establishment seemed to take their night's rest on a mat, wrapped in a bournous, wherever they chanced to find themselves, provided it was under shelter; the women in some *penetralia* beyond the doorway, though they were not otherwise secluded, and only partially veiled their faces at sight of a stranger. Arthur had by this time made out that the sheik, who was a very handsome man over middle age, seemed to have two wives; one probably of his own age, and, though withered up into a brown old mummy, evidently the ruler at home, wearing the most ornaments, and issuing her orders in a shrill, cracked tone. There was a much younger and handsome one, the mother apparently of two or three little girls from ten or twelve years old to five, and there was a mere girl, with beautiful, melancholy gazelle-like eyes, and a baby in her arms. She wore no ornaments, but did not seem to be classed with the slaves who ran about at the commands of the elder dame.

However, his own position was a matter of much more anxious care, although he had more hope of discovering what it really was.

He had, however, to be patient. The sunrise orisons were no sooner paid than there was a continual resort to the tent of the merchant, who was found sitting there calmly smoking his long pipe, and ready to offer the like, also a cup of coffee, to all who came to traffic with him. He seemed to have a miscellaneous stock of coffee, tobacco, pipes, preparations of sugar, ornaments in gold and silver, jewelry, charms, pistols, and a host of other articles in stock, and to be ready to purchase or barter these for the wax, embroidered handkerchiefs, yarn, and other productions and manufactures of the place. Not a single purchase could be made on either side without a tremendous haggling, shouting, and gesticulating, as if the parties were on the verge of coming to blows; whereas all was in good fellowship, and a pleasing excitement and diversion where time was of no value to anybody. Arthur began to despair of ever gaining attention. He was allowed to wander about as he pleased within the village gates, and

Ulysse was apparently quite happy with the little children, who were beautiful and active, although kept dirty and ragged as a protection from the evil eye.

Somehow the engrossing occupation of every one, especially of the only two creatures with whom he could converse, made Arthur more desolate than ever. He lay down under an ilex, and his heart ached with a sick longing he had not experienced since he had been with the Nithsdales, for his mother and his home—the tall, narrow-gabled house that had sprung up close to the grim old peel tower, the smell of the sea, the tinkling of the burn. He fell asleep in the heat of the day, and it was to him as if he were once more sitting by the old shepherd on the braeside, hearing him tell the old tales of Johnnie Armstrong or Willie o' the wudspurs.

Actually a Scottish voice was in his ears, as he looked up and saw the turbaned head of Yusuf, the merchant, bending over him, and saying:

"Wake up, my bonny laddie; we can hae our crack in peace while these folks are taking their noonday sleep. Aweel, and where are ye frae, and how do you ca' yersel'?"

"I am from Berwickshire," responded the youth, and as the man started—"My name is Arthur Maxwell Hope of Burnside."

"Eh! No a son of auld Sir Davie?"

"His youngest son."

The man clasped his hands, and uttered a strange sound, as if in the extremity of amazement, and there was a curious unconscious change of tone as he said:

"Sir Davie's son! Ye'll never have heard tell of Partan Jeannie?" he added.

"A very old fishwife," said Arthur, "who used to come her rounds to our door? Was she of kin to you?"

"My mither, sir. Mony's the time I hae peepit out on the cuddie's back between the creels at the door of the braw house of Burnside, and mony's the bannock and cookie the gude lady gied me. My minnie'll no be living thae noo," he added, not very tenderly.

"I should fear not," said Arthur. "I had not seen or heard of her for some time before I left home, and that is now three years since. She looked very old then, and I remember my mother saying she was not fit to come her rounds."

"She wasna that auld," returned the merchant, gravely; "but she had led sic a life as falls to the lot of nae wife in this country."

Arthur had almost said, "Whose fault was that?" but he dared not offend a possible protector, and softened his

words into, "It is strange to find you here, and a Mohammedan too."

"Hoots, Maister Arthur, let that flea stick by the wa'. We maun do at Rome as Rome does, as ye'll soon find"—and disregarding Arthur's exclamation—"and the bit bairn, I thocht ye said he was no Scot, when I was daundering awa' at the French yestreen."

"No, he is half-Irish, half-French, eldest son of Count Burke, a good Jacobite, who got into trouble with the Prince of Orange, and is high in the French service."

"And what gars your father's son to be *secretaire*, as ye ca'd it, to Frenchman or Irishman either?"

"Well, it was my own fault. I was foolish enough to run away from school to join the rising for our own king's——"

"Eh, sirs! And has there been a rising on the borderside against the English pock puddings? Oh, gin I had kenned it!"

Yusuf's knowledge of English politics had been dim at the best, and he had apparently left Scotland before even Queen Anne was on the throne. When he understood Arthur's story, he communicated his own. He had been engaged in a serious brawl with some English fishers, and in fear of the consequences had fled from Eyemouth, and after casting about as a common sailor in various merchantships, had been captured by a Moorish vessel, and had found it expedient to purchase his freedom by conversion to Islam, after which his Scottish shrewdness and thrift had resulted in his becoming a prosperous itinerant merchant, with his headquarters at Bona. He expressed himself willing and anxious to do all he could for his young countryman; but it would be almost impossible to do so unless Arthur would accept the religion of his captors; and he explained that the two boys were the absolute property of the tribe, who had discovered and rescued them when going to the seashore to gather kelp for the glasswork practiced by the Moors in their little furnaces.

"Forsake my religion? Never!" cried Arthur indignantly.

"Saftly, saftly," said Yusuf; "nae doot ye trow as I did that they are a' mere pagans and savage heathens, worshiping Baal and Ashtaroth, but I fand mysel' quite mista'en. They nae no idols, and girn at the blinded Papists as muckle as auld Deacon Shortcoats himsel'."

"I know that," threw in Arthur.

"Ay, and they are a hantle mair pious and devout than ever a body I hae seen in Eyemouth, or a' the country-side to boot; forbye, my Minnie's auld auntie, that sat graning by the ingle, and aye banned us when we came ben. The

meneester himsel' dinna gae about blessing and praying over ilka sma' matter like the meenest of us here, and for a' the din they make at hame about the honorable Sabbath, wha thinks of praying five times the day? While as for being the waur for liquor, these folks kenna the very taste o' it. Put yon sheik down on the wharf at Eyemouth, and what wad he say to the Christian folk there?"

A shock of conviction passed over Arthur, though he tried to lose it in indignant defense; but Yusuf did not venture to stay any longer with him, and, bidding him think over what had been said, since slavery or Islam were the only alternatives, returned to the tents of merchandise.

First thoughts with the youth had of course been of horror at the bare idea of apostasy, and yet as he watched his Moorish hosts, he could not but own to himself that he never had dreamed that to be among them would be so like dwelling under the oak of Mamre, in the tents of Abraham. From what he remembered of Partan Jeannie's reputation as a being only tolerated and assisted by his mother, on account of her extreme misery and destitution, he could believe that the ne'er-do-weel son, who must have forsaken her before he himself was born, might have really been raised in morality by association with the grave, faithful, and temperate followers of Mohammed, rather than the scum of the port of Eyemouth.

For himself and the boy, what did slavery mean? He hoped to understand better from Yusuf, and at any rate to persuade the man to become the medium of communication with the outside world, beyond that "dissociable ocean," over which his wistful gaze wandered. Then the ransom of the little Chevalier de Bourke would be certain, and, if there were any gratitude in the world, his own. But how long would this take, and what might befall them in the meantime?

Ulysse all this time seemed perfectly happy with the small Moors, who all romped together without distinction of rank, of master, slave or color, for Yusuf's little negro was freely received among them. At night, however, Ulysse's old home self seemed to revive; he crept back to Arthur, tired and weary, fretting for mother, sister, and home; and even after he had fallen asleep, waking again to cry for Julienne. Poor Arthur, he was a rough nurse, but pity kept him patient, and he was even glad to see that the child had not forgotten his home.

Meantime, ever since the sunset prayer, there had been smoking of pipes and drinking of coffee, and earnest discussion between the sheik and the merchant, and by and by Yusuf came and sat himself down by Arthur, smiling a

little at the young man's difficulty in disposing of those long legs upon the ground.

"Ye'll have to learn this and other things, sir," said he, as he crossed his own under him, Eastern fashion; but his demeanor was, on the whole, that of the fisher to the laird's son, and he evidently thought that he had a grand proposal to make, for which Master Arthur ought to be infinitely obliged.

He explained to Arthur that Sheik Abou Ben Zegri had never had more than two sons, and that both had been killed the year before in trying to recover their cattle from the Cabeleyzes, "a sort of Hieland caterans."

The girl whom Arthur had noticed was the widow of the elder of the two, and the child was only a daughter. The sheik had been much impressed by Arthur's exploits in swimming or floating round the headland and saving the child, and regarded his height as something gigantic. Moreover, Yusuf had asserted that he was son to a great bey in his own country, and in consequence Abou Ben Zegri was willing to adopt him as a son, provided he would embrace the true faith, and marry Ayesha, the widow.

"And," said Yusuf, "these women are no that ill for wives, as I ken ower weel" and he sighed. "I had as gude and douce a wee wifie at Bona as heart culd wish, and twa bonny bairnies; but when I cam' back frae my rounds, the plague had been there before me. They were a' gone, even Ali, that had just began to ca' me Ab, Ab, and I hae never had heart to gang back to the town house. She was a gude wife—nae flying, nae rampauging. She wad hae died wi' shame to be likened to thae randy wives at home. Ye might do waur than tak' such a fair offer, Maister Arthur."

"You mean it all kindly," said Arthur, touched; "but for nothing—no, for nothing—can a Christian deny his Lord, or yield up his hopes for hereafter."

"As for that," returned Yusuf, "the meenester and Deacon Shortcoats, and my auld auntie, and the lave of them, aye ca'ed me a vessel of destruction. That was the best name they had for puir Tam. So what odds culd it mak, if I took up with the prophet, and I was ower lang leggit to row in a galley? Forbye, here they say that a man who prays and gies awmous, and keeps free wine, is sicker to win to Paradise and a' the houris. I had rather it war my puir Zorah than any strange houri of them a'; but anyway, I hae been a better man sin' I took up wi' them than ever I was as a cursing, swearing, drunken, fetching sailor lad wha feared neither God nor devil."

"That was scarce the fault of the Christian faith," said Arthur.

"Aweel, the first answer in the Shorter Carritch was a' they ever garred me learn, and that is what we here say of Allah. I see no muckle to choose, and I *ken* ane thing—it is a hell on earth at ance gin ye gang not alang wi' them. And that's sicker, as ye'll find to your cost, sir, gin ye be na the better guided."

"With hope, infinite hope, beyond," said Arthur, trying to fortify himself. "No, I cannot, cannot deny my Lord—my Lord that bought me!"

"We own Issa Ben Mariam for a prophet," said Yusuf.

"But He is only my Master, my Redeemer, and God. No, come what may, I can never renounce him," said Arthur, with vehemence.

"Weel, aweel," said Yusuf, "maybe ye'll see in time what's for your gude. I'll tell the sheik it would misbecome your father's son to do sic a deed ower lichtly, and strive to gar him wait while I am in these parts to get your word, and nae doot it will be wiselike at the last."

CHAPTER VII.

MASTER AND SLAVE.

"I only heard the reckless waters roar,
Those waves that would not bear me from the shore.
I only marked the glorious sun and sky,
Too bright, too blue for my captivity,
And felt that all which Freedom's bosom cheers
Must break my chain before it dried my tears."

Byron—"The Corsair."

AT the rate at which the traffic in Yusuf's tent proceeded, Arthur Hope was likely to have some little time for deliberation on the question presented to him whether to be a free Moslem sheik or a Christian slave.

Not only had almost every household in El-Arnieh to chaffer with the merchant for his wares and to dispose of home-made commodities, but from other adowaras and from hill-farms Moors and Cabyles came in with their produce of wax, wool, or silk, to barter—if not with Yusuf, with the inhabitants of El-Arnieh, who could weave and embroider, forge cutlery, and make glass from the raw material these supplied. Other Cabyles, divers from the coast, came up, with coral and sponges, the latter of which was the article in which Yusuf preferred to deal, though nothing came amiss to him that he could carry, or that could carry itself—such as a young foal; even the little black boy had been taken on speculation—and so indeed had the big Abyssinian, who, though dumb, was the most useful, ready, and alert of his five slaves.

Every bargain seemed to occupy at least an hour, and perhaps Yusuf lingered the longer in order to give Arthur

more time for consideration; or it might be that his native tongue, once heard, exercised an irresistible fascination over him. He never failed to have what he called a "crack" with his young countryman at the hour of the siesta, or at night, perhaps persuading the sheik that it was controversial, though it was more apt to be on circumstances of the day's trade or the news of the Border-side. Controversy indeed there could be little with one so ignorant as kirk treatment in that century was apt to leave the outcasts of society, nor had conversion to Islam given him much instruction in its tenets; so that the conversation generally was on earthly topics, though it always ended in assurances that Master Arthur would suffer for it if he did not perceive what was for his good. To which Arthur replied to the effect that he must suffer rather than deny his faith; and Yusuf, declaring that a willful man maun have his way, and that he would rue it too late, went off affronted, but always returned to the charge at the next opportunity.

Meantime Arthur was free to wander about unmolested and pick up the language, in which, however, Ulysse made far more rapid progress, and could be heard chattering away as fast, if not as correctly, as if it were French or English.

The delicious climate and the open-air life were filling the little fellow with a strength and vigor unknown to him in a Parisian *salon*, and he was in the highest spirits among his brown playfellows, ceasing to pine for his mother and sister; and though he still came to Arthur for the night, or in any trouble, it was more and more difficult to get him to submit to be washed and dressed in his tight European clothes, or to say his prayers. He was always sleepy at night and volatile in the morning, and could not be got to listen to the little instructions with which Arthur tried to arm him against Mohammedanism, into which the poor little fellow was likely to drift as ignorantly and unconsciously as Yusuf himself.

And what was the alternative? Arthur himself never wavered, nor indeed actually felt that he had a choice; but the prospect before him was gloomy, and Yusuf did not soften it. The sheik would sell him, and he would either be made to work on some mountain-farm, or put on board a galley; and Yusuf had sufficient experience of the horrors of the latter to assure him emphatically that the gude leddy of Burnside would break her heart to think of her bonny laddie there.

"It would more surely break her heart to think of her son giving up his faith," returned Arthur.

As to the child, the opinion of the tribe seemed to be that

he was just fit to be sent to the sultan to be bred as a janizary. "He will come that gate to be as great a man as in his ain countree," said Yusuf; "wi' horse to ride, and sword to bear, and braws to wear, like King Solomon in all his glory."

"While his father and mother would far rather he were lying dead with her under the waves in that cruel bay," returned Arthur.

"Hout, mon, ye dinna ken what's for his gude, not for your ain neither," retorted Yusuf.

"Good here is not good hereafter."

"The life of a dog and waur here," muttered Yusuf; "ye'll mind me when it is too late."

"Nay, Yusuf, if you will only take word of our condition to Algiers, we shall—at least the boy—be assuredly redeemed, and you would win a high reward."

"I am no free to gang to Algiers," said Yusuf. "I fell out with a loon there, one of those janizaries that gang hectoring aboot as though the world were not gude enough for them, and if I hadna made the best of my way out of the toon, my pow wad be a warricow on the wa's of the tower."

"There are French at Bona, you say. Remember, I ask you to put yourself in no danger, only to bear the tidings to any European," entreated Arthur.

"And how are they to find ye?" demanded Yusuf. "Abou Ben Zegri will never keep you here after having evened his gude-daughter to ye. He'll sell you to some corsair captain, and then the best that could betide ye wad be that a shot frae the Knights of Malta should make quick work wi' ye. Or, look at the dumbie there, Fareek. A Christian, he ca's himsel', too, though 'tis of a by-ordinar' fashion, such as Deacon Shortcoats would scarce own. I coft him dog cheap at Tunis, when his master, the vizier, had had his tongue cut out—for but knowing of some deed that suld ne'er have been done—and his puir feet bastinadoed to a jelly. Gin a' the siller in the dey's treasury ransomed ye, what gude would it do ye after that?"

"I cannot help that—I cannot forsake my God. I must trust him not to forsake me."

"And, as usual, Yusuf went off angrily muttering, "He that will to Cupar maun to Cupar."

Perhaps Arthur's resistance had begun more for the sake of honor, and instinctive clinging to hereditary faith, without the sense of heroism or enthusiasm for martyrdom which sustained Estelle, and rather with the feeling that inconstancy to his faith and his Lord would be base and disloyal. But, as the long days rolled on, if the future of toil and dreary misery developed itself before him, the

sense of personal love and aid toward the Lord and Master whom he served grew upon him.

Neither the gazelle-eyed Ayesha nor the prosperous village life presented any great temptation. He would have given them all for one bleak day of mist on a border moss; it was the appalling contrast with the hold of a Moorish galley that at times startled him, together with the only too great probability that he should be utterly incapable of saving poor little Ulisse from unconscious apostasy.

Once Yusuf observed that if he would only make outward submission to Moslem law, he might retain his own belief and trust in the Lord he seemed so much to love, and of whom he said more good than any Moslem did of the prophet.

"If I deny Him, He will deny me," said Arthur.

"And will na He forgive ane as is hard pressed?" asked Yusuf.

"It is a very different thing to go against the light, as I should be doing," said Arthur, "and what it might be for that poor bairn, whom God preserve."

"And wow! sir. 'Tis far different wi' you that had the best of gude learning frae the gude leddy," muttered Yusuf. "My minnie aye needit me to sort the fish and gang her errands, and wad scarce hae sent me to scule, gin I wad hae gane where they girned at me for Partan Jeannie's wean, and gied me mair o' the tawse than of the hornbook. Gin the Lord, as ye ca' him, had ever seemed to me what ye say he is to you, Maister Arthur, I micht hae thocht twice o'er the matter. But there's nae ganging back the noo. A christian's life they harm na, though they mak' it a mere weariness to him; but for him that quits the prophet, tearing the flesh wi' iron cleeks is the best they hae for him."

This time Yusuf retreated, not as usual in anger, but as it the bare idea he had broached was too terrible to be dwelt upon. He had by the end of a fortnight completed all his business at El-Arnieh, and Arthur, having by this time picked up enough of the language to make himself comprehensible, and to know fully what was set before him, was called upon to make his decision, so that either he might be admitted by regular ritual into the Moslem faith, and adopted by the sheik, or else be advertised by Yusuf at the next town as a strong young slave.

Sitting in the gate among the village magnates, like an elder of old, Sheik Abou Ben Zegri, with considerable grace and dignity, set the choice before the son of the sea in most affectionate terms, asking of him to become the child of his old age, and to heal the breach left by the swords of the robbers of the mountains.

The old man's fine, dark eyes filled with tears, and there was a pathos in his noble manner that made Arthur greatly grieved to disappoint him, and sorry not to have sufficient knowledge of the language to qualify more graciously the resolute reply he had so often rehearsed to himself, expressing his hearty thanks, but declaring that nothing could induce him to forsake the religion of his fathers.

"Wilt thou remain a dog of an unbeliever, and receive the treatment of dogs?"

"I must," said Arthur.

"The youth is a goodly youth," said the sheik; "it is ill that his heart is blind. Once again, young man, Issa Ben Mariam and slavery, or Mohammed and freedom?"

"I cannot deny my Lord Christ."

There was a pause. Arthur stood upright, with lips compressed, hands clasped together, while the sheik and his companions seemed struck by his courage and high spirit. Then one of them—a small, ugly fellow, who had some pretensions to be considered the sheik's next heir—cried, "Out on the infidel dog!" and set the example of throwing a handful of dust at him. The crowd who watched around were not slow to follow the example, and Arthur thought he was actually being stoned; but the missiles were for the most part not harmful, only disgusting, blinding, and confusing. There was a tremendous hubbub of vituperation, and he was at last actually stunned by a blow, waking to find himself alone, and with hands and feet bound, in a dirty little shed appropriated to camels. Should he ever be allowed to see poor Ulysse again, or to speak to Yusuf, in whom lay their only faint hope of redemption? He was helpless, and the boy was at the mercy of the Moors. Was he utterly forsaken?

It was growing late in the day, and he had had no food for many hours. Was he to be neglected and starved? At last he heard steps approaching, and the door was opened by the man who had led the assault on him, who addressed him as "Son of an old ass—dog of a slave," bade him stand up and show his height, at the same time cutting the cords that bound him. It was an additional pang that it was to Yusuf that he was thus to exhibit himself, no doubt in order that the merchant should carry a description of him to some likely purchaser. He could not comprehend the words that passed, but it was very bitter to be handled like a horse at a fair—doubly so that he, a Hope of Burnside, should thus be treated by Partan Jeannie's son.

There ensued outside the shrieking and roaring which always accompanied a bargain, and which lasted two full hours. Finally, Yusuf looked into the hut and roughly

said, in Arabic, "Come over to me, dog; thou art mine. Kiss the shoes of thy master"—adding, in his native tongue, "For ance, sir. It maun be done before these loons."

Certainly the ceremony would have been felt as less humiliating toward almost anybody else, but Arthur endured it; and then was led away to the tents beyond the gate.

"There, sir," said Yusuf, "it ill sorts your father's son to be in sic a case, but it canna be helpit. I culd na leave behind the bonny Scots tongue, let alane the gude Leddy Hope's son."

"You have been very good to me, Yusuf," said Arthur, his pride much softened by the merchant's evident sense of the situation. "I know you mean me well, but the boy——"

"Hoots!" the bairn is happy eno'. He will come to a higher preferment than even you or I. Why, mon, an aga of the janizaries is as good as the deuk himsel'."

"Yusuf, I am very grateful—I believe you must have paid heavily to spare me from ill usage."

"Ye may say that, sir. Forty piasters of Tunis and eight mules and twa pair of silver-mounted pistols. The extortionate rogue wad hae had the little dagger, but I stood out against that."

"I see, I am deeply beholden," said Arthur; "but it would be tenfold better if you would take him instead of me!"

"What for suld I do that? He is nae countryman of mine—one side French and the other Irish. He is naught to me."

"He is heir to a noble house," urged Arthur. "They will reward you amply for saving him."

"Mair like to girn at me for a Moor. Na, na! Hae na I dune enough for ye, Maister Arthur—giving half my beasties, and more than half my silver? Canna ye be content without that whining bairn?"

"I should be a forsworn man to be content to leave the child, whose dead mother prayed me to protect him, amid those who will turn him from her faith. See, now, I am a man, and can guard myself, by the grace of God; but to leave the poor child here would be letting these men work their will on him ere any ransom could come. His mother would deem it giving him up to perdition. Let me remain here, and take the helpless child. You know how to bargain. His price might be my ransom."

"Ay, when the jackals and hyenas have picked your banes, or you have died under the lash, chained to the oar, as I hae seen, Maister Arthur."

"Better so than betray the dead woman's trust. How no——"

For there was a pattering of feet, a cry of "Arthur! Arthur!" and sobbing, screaming, and crying, Ulysse threw himself on his friend's breast. He was pursued by one or two of the hangers-on of the sheik's household, and the first comer seized him by the arm; but he clung to Arthur, screamed and kicked, and the old nurse who had come hobbling after coaxed in vain. He cried out in a mixture of Arabic and French that he *would* sleep with Arthur—Arthur must put him to bed. No one should take him away.

"Let him stay," responded Yusuf; "his time will come soon enough."

Indulgence to children was the rule, and there was an easy good-nature about the race which made them ready to defer the storm and acquiesce in the poor little fellow remaining for another evening with that last remnant of his home to whom he always reverted at nightfall.

He held tremblingly by Arthur till all were gone, then looked about in terror, and required to be assured that no one was coming to take him away.

"They shall not," he cried. "Arthur, you will not leave me alone? They are all gone—mamma and Estelle and *la bonne* and Laurent and my uncle and all, and you will not go?"

"Not now, not to-night, my dear little mannie," said Arthur, tears in his eyes for the first time throughout these misfortunes.

"Not now! No, never!" said the boy, hugging him almost to choking. "That naughty Ben Kader said they had sold you for a slave, and you were going away; but I knew I should find you—you are not a slave!—you are not black——"

"Ah! Ulysse, it is too true; I am——"

"No! no! no!" the child stamped, and hung on him in a passion of tears. "You shall not be a slave. My papa shall come with his soldiers and set you free."

Altogether the boy's vehemence, agitation, and terror were such that Arthur found it impossible to do anything but soothe and hush him, as best might be, till his sobs subsided gradually, still heaving his little chest even after he fell asleep in the arms of his unaccustomed nurse, who found himself thus baffled in using this last and only opportunity of trying to strengthen the child's faith, and was also hindered from pursuing Yusuf, who had left the tent. And if it were separation that caused all this distress, what likelihood that Yusuf would encumber himself with

a child who had shown such powers of wailing and screaming?

He dared not stir nor speak for fear of wakening the boy, even when Yusuf returned and stretched himself on his mat, drawing a thick woolen cloth over him, for the nights were chill. Long did Arthur lie awake under the strange sense of slavery and helplessness, and utter uncertainty as to his fate, expecting, in fact, that Yusuf meant to keep him as a sort of tame animal, to talk Scotch; but hoping to work on him in time to favor an escape, and at any rate to dispatch a letter to Algiers, as a forlorn hope for the ultimate redemption of the poor little unconscious child who lay warm and heavy across his breast. Certainly, Arthur had never so prayed for aid, light, and deliverance as now!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SEARCH.

"The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks,
The long day wanes, the slow moon climbs. The deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends."

Tennyson.

ARTHUR fell asleep at last, and did not waken till after sunrise, nor did Ulysse, who must have been exhausted with crying and struggling. When they did awaken, Arthur thinking with heavy heart that the moment of parting was come, he saw, indeed, the other three slaves busied in making bales of the merchandise; but the master, as well as the Abyssinian, Fareek, and the little negro were all missing. Bekir, who was a kind of foreman, and looked on the new white slave with some jealousy, roughly pointed to some coarse food, and in reply to the question whether the merchant were taking leave of the sheik, intimated that it was no business of theirs, and assumed authority to make his new fellow-slave assist in the hardest of the packing. Arthur had no heart to resist, much as it galled him to be ordered about by this rude fellow. It was only a taste, as he well knew, of what he had embraced, and he was touched by poor little Ulysse's persistency in keeping as close as possible, though his playfellows came down and tried first to lure, then to drag him away, and finally remained to watch the process of packing up. Though Bekir was too disdainful to reply to his fellow-slave's questions, Arthur picked up from answers to the Moors who came down that Yusuf had recollected that he had not finished his transactions with a little village of Cabyle coral and sponge fishers on the coast, and had gone down thither, taking the little negro, to whom the head

man seemed to have taken a fancy, so as to become a possible purchaser, and with the Abyssinian to attend to the mules.

A little before sundown Yusuf returned. Fareek lifted down a pannier covered by a crimson-and-yellow kerchief, and Yusuf declared, with much apparent annoyance, that the child was sick, and that this had frustrated the sale. He was asleep, must be carried into the tent, and not disturbed; for though the Cabyles had not purchased him, there was no affording to lose anything of so much value. Moreover, observing Ulysse still hovering around the Scot, he said, "You may bide here the night, laddie, I ha tell't the sheik;" and he repeated the same to the slaves in Arabic, dismissing them to hold a parting feast on a lamb stuffed with pistachio nuts, together with their village friends.

Then drawing near to Arthur, he said, "Can ye gar yon wean keep a quiet sough, if we make him pass for the little black?"

Arthur started with joy, and stammered some words of intense relief and gratitude.

"The deed's no dune yet," said Yusuf, "and it is ower like to end in our leaving a' our banes on the sands! But a wilfu' man maun have his way," he repeated; "so, sir, if it be your wull, ye'd better speak to the bairn, for we must make a blackamoor of him while there is licht to do it, or the Bekir, whom I dinna lippen to, comes back frae the feast."

Ulysse, being used to Irish-English, had little understanding of Yusuf's broad Scotch; but he was looking anxiously from one to the other of the speakers, and when Arthur explained to him that the disguise, together with perfect silence, was the only hope of not being left behind among the Moors, and the best chance of getting back to his home and dear ones again, he perfectly understood. As to the blackening, for which Yusuf had prepared a mixture to be laid on with a feather, it was perfectly enchanting to *faire la comedie.* He laughed so much that he had to be peremptorily hushed, and they were sensible of the danger that in case of a search he might betray himself to his Moorish friends; and Arthur tried to make him comprehend the extreme danger, making him cry so that his cheeks had to be touched up. His eyes and hair were dark, and the latter was cut to its shortest by Yusuf, who further managed to fasten some tufts of wool dipped in the black unguent to the kerchief that bound his head. The childish features had something of the Irish cast, which lent itself to the transformation, and in the scanty garments of the little negro Arthur owned that he should

never have known the small French gentleman. Arthur was full of joy—Yusuf gruff, brief, anxious, like one acting under some compulsion most unwillingly, and even despondently, but apparently constrained by a certain instinctive feudal feeling, which made him follow the desires of the young border laird's son.

All had been packed beforehand, and there was nothing to be done but to strike the tents, saddle the mules, and start. Ulysse, still very sleepy, was lifted into the pannier, almost at the first streak of dawn, while the slaves were grumbling at being so early called up; and to a Moor, who woke up and offered to take charge of the little bey, Yusuf replied that the child had been left in the sheik's house.

So they were safely out at the outer gate, and proceeding along a beautiful path leading above the cliffs. The mules kept in one long string, Bekir with the foremost, which was thus at some distance from the hindmost, which carried Ulysse and was attended by Arthur, while the master rode his own animals and gave directions. The fiction of illness was kept up, and when the bright eyes looked up in too lively a manner, Yusuf produced some of the sweets, which were always part of his stock in trade, as a bribe to quietness.

At sunrise the halt for prayer was a trial to Arthur's intense anxiety, and far more so was the noontide one for sleep. He even ventured a remonstrance, but was answered, "Mair haste, worse speed. Our lives are no worth a boddle till the search is over."

They were on the shady side of a great rock overhung by a beautiful creeping plant, and with a spring near at hand, and Yusuf, in leisurely fashion, squatted down, caused Arthur to lift out the child, who was fast asleep again, and the mules to be allowed to feed, and distributed some dried goat's flesh and dates; but Ulysse, somewhat to Arthur's alarm, did not wake sufficiently to partake.

Looking up in alarm, he met a sign from Yusuf, and presently a whisper, "No hurt done—'tis safer thus——"

And by this time there were alarming sounds on the air. The sheik and two of the chief men of El-Arnieh were on horseback and armed with matchlocks; and the whole *posse* of the village were following on foot, with yells and vituperations of the entire ancestry of the merchant, and far more complicated and furious threats than Arthur could follow; but he saw Yusuf go forward to meet them with the utmost cool courtesy.

They seemed somewhat discomposed. Yusuf appeared to condole with them on the loss, and, waving his hands, put all his baggage at their service for a search, letting them

run spears through the bales, and overturn the baskets of sponges, and search behind every rock. When they approached the sleeping boy, Arthur, with throbbing heart, dimly comprehended that Yusuf was repeating the story of the disappointment of a purchase caused by his illness, and lifting for a moment the covering laid over him to show the bare black legs and arms. There might also have been some hint of infection which, in spite of all Moslem belief in fate, deterred Abou Ben Zegri from an overclose inspection. Yusuf further invented a story of having put the little Frank in charge of a Moorish woman in the adowara; but added he was so much attached to the son of the sea that most likely he had wandered out in search of him, and the only wise course would be to seek him before he was devoured by any of the wild beasts near home.

Nevertheless, there was a courteous and leisurely smoking of pipes and drinking of coffee before the sheik and his followers turned homeward. To Arthur's alarm and surprise, however, Yusuf did not resume the journey, but told Bekir that there would hardly be a better halting-place within their powers, as the sun was already some way on his downward course; and besides, it would take some time to repack the goods which had been cast about in every direction during the search.

The days were at their shortest, though that was not very short, closing in at about five o'clock, so that there was not much time to spare. Arthur began to feel some alarm at the continued drowsiness of the little boy, who only once muttered something, turned round, and slept again.

"What have you done to him?" asked Arthur, anxiously.

"The poppy," responded Yusuf. "Never fash yoursel'. The bairn willna be a hair the waur, and 'tis better so than that he shuld rax a' our craigs."

Yusuf's peril was so much the greater that it was impossible to object to any of his precautions, especially as he might take offense and throw the whole matter over; but it was impossible not to chafe secretly at the delay, which seemed incomprehensible. Indeed, the merchant was avoiding private communication with Arthur, only assuming the master, and ordering about in a peremptory fashion which it was very hard to digest.

After the sunset orisons had been performed, Yusuf regaled his slaves with a donation of coffee and tobacco, but with a warning to Arthur not to partake, and to keep to windward of them. So, too, did the Abyssinian, and the cause of the warning was soon evident, as Bekir and his companion nodded, and then sank into a slumber as sound as

that of the little Frenchman. Indeed, Arthur himself was weary enough to fall asleep soon after sundown, in spite of his anxiety, and the stars were shining like great lamps when Yusuf awoke him. One mule stood equipped beside him, and held by the Abyssinian. Yusuf pointed to the child, and said: "Lift him upon it."

Arthur obeyed, finding a pannier empty on one side to receive the child, who only muttered and writhed instead of awaking. The other side seemed laden. Yusuf lead the animal, retracing their way, while fire-flies flitted around with their green lights, and the distant laughter of hyenas gave Arthur a thrill of loathing horror. Huge bats fluttered round, and once or twice grim shapes crossed their path. "Uncanny beasties," quoth Yusuf; "but they will soon be behind us."

He turned into a rapidly sloping path. Arthur felt a fresh salt breeze in his face, and his heart leaped up with hope.

In about an hour and a half they had reached a cove, shut in by dark rocks which in the night looked immeasurable, but on the white beach a few little huts were dimly discernible, one with a light in it. The sluggish dash of waves could be heard on the shore; there was a sense of infinite space and breadth before them; and Jupiter, sitting in the northwest, was like an enormous lamp, casting a pathway of light shimmering on the waters to lead the exiles home.

Three or four boats were drawn up on the beach; a man rose up from within one, and words in a low voice were exchanged between him and Yusuf; while Fareek, grinning so that his white teeth could be seen in the starlight, unloaded the mule, placing its packs, a long Turkisk blunderbuss, and two skins of water in the boat, and arranging a mat on which Arthur could lay the sleeping child.

Well might the youth's heart bound with gratitude, as unmindful of all the further risks and uncertainties to be encountered, he almost saw his way back to Burnside!

CHAPTER IX.

ESCAPE.

"Beside the helm he sat, steering expert,
Nor sleep fell ever on his eyes that watch'd
Intent the Pleiads, tardy in decline,
Bootes and the Bear, call'd else the Wain,
Which in his polar prison circling, looks
Direct toward Orion, and alone
Of these sinks never to the briny deep."

Odyssey (Cowper).

THE boat was pushed off, the Abyssinian leaped into it; Arthur paused to pour out his thankfulness to Yusuf, but

was met with the reply, "Hout awa'! Time enugh for that—in wi' ye." And fancying there was some alarm, he sprung in, and to his amazement found Yusuf instantly at his side, taking the rudder and giving some order to Fareek, who had taken possession of a pair of oars; while the water seemed to flash and glitter a welcome at every dip.

"You are coming! you are coming!" exclaimed Arthur, clasping the merchant's hand, almost beside himself with joy.

"Sma' hope wad there be of a callant like yersel' and the wean there winning awa' by yer lane," growled Yusuf.

"You have given up all for us."

"There wasna muckle to gie," returned the sponge merchant. "Sin' the gudewife and her bit bairnies at Bona were gane, I hadna the heart to gang thereawa' nor quit the sound o' the bonny Scots tongue. I wad as soon gang to the bottom as to the toom house. For dinna ye trow yersells ower sicker e'en the noo."

"Is there fear of pursuit?"

"No mickle o' that. The folk here are what they ca' Cabyles, a douce set, not forgathering with Arabs nor wi' Moors. I wad na gang among them till the search was over to-day, but yesterday I saw yon carle, and coft the boatie frae him for the wee blackamoor and the mule. The Moors at El-Aziz are not seafaring; and gin the morn they jalouse what we have done, we have the start of them. Na, I'm not feared for them; but forbye that, this is no the season for an open boatie wi' a crew of three and a wean. Gin we met an Algerian or Tunisian cruiser, as we are maist like to do, a bullet or drooning wad be ower gude in their een for us—for me, that is to say. They wad spare the bairn, and may think you too likely a lad to hang on the walls like a split corbie on the woodsman's lodge."

"Well, Yusuf, my name is Hope, you know," said Arthur. "God has brought us so far, and will scarce leave us now. I feel three times the man that I was when I lay down this evening. Do we keep to the north, where we are sure to come to a Christian land in time?"

"Easier said than done. Ye little ken what the currents are in this same sea, or deed ye'll soon ken when we get into them."

Arthur satisfied himself that they were making for the north by looking at the pole star, so much lower than he was used to see it in Scotland that he hardly recognized his old friend; but, as he watched the studded belt of the hunter and the glittering Pleiades, the Horatian dread of

Nimbosus Orion occurred to him as a thought to be put away.

Meantime there was a breeze from the land, and the sail was hoisted. Yusuf bade both Arthur and Fareek lie down to sleep, for their exertions would be wanted by and by, since it would not be safe to use the sail by daylight. It was very cold—wild blasts coming down from the mountains; but Arthur crept under the woolen mantle that had been laid over Ulysse, and was weary enough to sleep soundly. Both were awakened by the lowering of the mast; and the little boy, who had quite slept off the drug, scrambling out from under the covering, was astonished beyond measure at finding himself between the glittering, sparkling expanse of sea and the sky, where the sun had just leaped up in a blaze of gold.

The white summits of Atlas were tipped with rosy light, beautiful to behold, though the voyagers had much rather have been out of sight of them.

"How much have we made, Yusuf?" began Arthur.

"Tam Armstrong, so please you, sir! Yusuf's dead and buried the noo; and if I were further beyant the grip of them that kenned him, my thrapple would feel all the sounder!"

This day was, he further explained, the most perilous one, since they were by no means beyond the track of vessels plying on the coast; and as a very jagged and broken cluster of rocks lay near, he decided on availing themselves of the shelter they afforded. The boat was steered into a narrow channel between two which stood up like the fangs of a great tooth, and afforded a pleasant shade; but there was such a screaming and calling of gulls, terns, cormorants, and all manner of other birds, as they entered the little strait, and such a cloud of them hovered and whirled overhead, that Tam uttered imprecations on their skirling, and bade his companions lie close and keep quiet till they had settled again, lest the commotion should betray that the rocks were the lair of fugitives.

It was not easy to keep Ulysse quiet, for he was in rapture at the rush of winged creatures, and no less so at the wonderful sea-anemones and starfish in the pools, where long streamers of weed of beautiful colors floated on the limpid water.

Nothing reduced him to stillness but the sight of the dried goat's flesh and dates that Tam Armstrong produced, and for which all had appetites, which had to be checked, since no one could tell how long it would be before any kind of haven could be reached.

Arthur bathed himself and his charge in a pool, after Tam had ascertained that no many-armed squid or cuttle-

fish lurked within it. And while Ulysse disported himself like a little fish, Arthur did his best to restore him to his natural complexion, and tried to cleanse the little garments, which showed only too plainly the lack of any change, and which were the only Frank or Christian clothes among them, since young Hope himself had been almost stripped when he came ashore, and wore the usual garb of Yusuf's slaves.

Presently Fareek made an imperative sign to hush the child's merry tongue; and peering forth in intense anxiety, the others perceived a lateen sail passing perilously near, but happily keeping aloof from the sharp reef of rocks around their shelter. Arthur had forgotten the child's prayers and his own, but Ulysse connected them with dressing, and the alarm of the passing ship had recalled them to the young man's mind, though he felt shy as he found that Tam Armstrong was not asleep, but was listening and watching with his keen gray eyes under their grizzled brows. Presently, when Ulysse was dropping to sleep again, the ex-merchant began to ask questions with the intelligence of his shrewd Scottish brains.

The stern Calvinism of the North was wont to consign to utter neglect the outcast border of civilization, where there were no decent parents to pledge themselves; and Partan Jeannie's son had grown up well-nigh in heathen ignoance among fisher lads and merchant sailors, till it had been left for him to learn among the Mohammedans both temperance and devotional habits. His whole faith and understanding would have been satisfied forever; but there had been strange yearnings within him ever since he had lost his wife and children, and these had not passed away when Arthur Hope came in his path. Like many another renegade, he could not withstand the attraction of his native tongue; and in this case it was doubled by the feudal attachment of the district to the family of Burnside, and a grateful remembrance of the lady who had been one of the very few persons who had ever done a kindly deed by the little outcast. He had broken with all his Moslem ties for Arthur Hope's sake; and these being left behind, he began to make some inquiries about that Christian faith to which he must needs return—if return be the right word in the case of one who knew so little when he had abjured it.

And Arthur had not been bred to the grim reading of the doctrine of predestination which had condemned poor Tam, even before he had embraced the faith of the prophet. Boyish, and not over-thoughtful, the youth, when brought face to face with apostasy, had been ready to give life or liberty rather than deny his Lord; and deep-

ened by that great decision, he could hold up that Lord and Redeemer in colors that made Tam see that his clinging to his faith was not out of mere honor and constancy, but that Mohammed had been a poor and wretched substitute for him whom the poor fellow had denied, not knowing what he did.

"Weel!" he said, "gin the deacon and the auld aunties had tellt me as mickle about him, thae Moors might ha' preached their thrapples sair for Tam. Mashallah! Maister Arthur, do ye think, noo, he can forgie a puir carle for turning frae him an' disowning him?"

"I am sure of it, Tam. He forgives all who come to him—and you—you did it in ignorance."

"And you trow na that I am a vessel of wrath, as they aye said?"

"No, no, no, Tam. How could that be with one who has done what you have for us? There is good in you—noble goodness, Tam; and who could have put it there but God, the Holy Spirit? I believe myself he was leading you all the time, though you did not know it; making you a better man first, and now, through this brave kindness to us, bringing you back to be a real true Christian and know him."

Arthur felt as if something put the words into his mouth, but he felt them with all his heart, and the tears were in his eyes.

At sundown Tam grew restless. Force of habit impelled him to turn to Mecca and make his devotions as usual, and after nearly kneeling down on the flat stone, he turned to Arthur and said, "I canna weel do without the bit prayer, sir."

"No, indeed, Tam. Only let it be in the right name."

And Arthur knelt down beside him and said the Lord's Prayer—then, under a spell of bashfulness, muttered special entreaty for protection and safety.

They were to embark again now that darkness would veil their movements, but the wind blew so much from the north that they could not raise the sail. The oars were taken by Tam and Fareek at first, but when they came into difficult currents Arthur changed places with the former.

And thus the hours passed. The Mediterranean may be in our eyes a European lake, but it was quite large enough to be a desert of sea and sky to the little crew of an open boat, even though they were favored by the weather. Otherwise, indeed, they must have perished in the first storm. They durst not sail except by night, and then only with northerly winds, nor could there be much rest, since they could not lay to and drift with the cur-

rents, lest they should be carried back to the African coast.

Only one of the three men could sleep at a time, and that by one of the others taking both oars, and in time this could not but become very exhausting. It was true that all the coasts to the north were of Christian lands; but in their Moorish garments and in perfect ignorance of Italian, strangers might fare no better in Sardinia or Sicily than in Africa, and Spain might be no better; but Tam endeavored to keep a northwesterly course, thinking from what Arthur had said that in this direction there was more chance of being picked up by a French vessel. Would their strength and provisions hold out? Of this there was serious doubt. Late in the year as it was, the heat and glare were as distressing by day as was the cold by night, and the continued exertion of rowing produced thirst, which made it very difficult to husband the water in the skins. Tam and Fareek were both tough, and inured to heat and privation; but Arthur, scarce yet come to his full height, and far from having attained proportionate robustness and muscular strength, could not help flagging, though, whenever steering was of minor importance, Tam gave him the rudder, moved by his wan looks, for he never complained, even when fragments of dry goat's flesh almost choked his parched mouth. The boy was never allowed to want for anything save water; but it was very hard to hear him fretting for it. Tam took the goatskin into his own keeping, and more than once uttered a rough reproof, and yet Arthur saw him give the child half of his own precious ration when it must have involved grievous suffering. The promise about giving the cup of cold water to a little one could not but rise to his lips.

"Cauld! and I wish it were cauld!" was all the response Tam made, but his face showed some gratification.

This was no season for traffic, and they had barely seen a sail or two in the distance, and these only such as the experienced eyes of the ex-sponge-merchant held to be dangerous. Deadly lassitude began to seize the young Scot; he began scarcely to heed what was to become of them, and had not energy to try to console Ulysse, who, having in an unwatched moment managed to swallow some seawater, was crying and wailing under the additional misery he had inflicted on himself. The sun beat down with noontide force, when on that fourth day, turning from its scorching, his languid eye espied a sail on the northern horizon.

"See," he cried, "that is not the way of the Moors."

"Bismillah! I beg your pardon, sir," cried Tam, but said no more, only looked intently.

Gradually, gradually the spectacle rose on their view fuller and fuller, not the ruddy wings of the Algerine or Italian, but the square, white, castle-like tiers of sails rising one above another, bearing along in a southeasterly direction.

"English or French," said Tam, with a long breath, for her colors and build were not yet discernible. "Mash-allah! I beg pardon. I mean, God grant she pass us not by!"

The mast was hastily raised, with Tam's turban unrolled floating at the top of it; and while he and Fareek plied their oars with might and main, he bade Arthur fire off at intervals the blunderbuss, which had hitherto lain idle at the bottom of the boat.

How long the intense suspense lasted they knew not ere Arthur cried, "They are slackening sail! Thank God. Tam, you have saved us! English!"

"Not so fast!" Tam uttered an Arabic and then a Scottish interjection.

Their signal had been seen by other eyes. An unmistakable Algerine, with the crescent flag, was bearing down on them from the opposite direction.

"Rascals. Do they not dread the British flag?" cried Arthur. "Surely that will protect us?"

"They are smaller and lighter, and with their galley-slaves can defy the wind, and loup off like a flea in a blanket," returned Tam, grimly. "Mair by token, they guess what we are, and will hold on to hae my life's bluid if naething mair! Here! Gie us a soup of the water, and the last bite of flesh. 'Twill serve us the noo, and we shall need it nae mair any way."

Arthur fed him, for he dared not slacken rowing for a moment. Then seeing Fareek, who had borne the brunt of the fatigue, looking spent, the youth, after swallowing a few morsels and a little foul-smelling drink, took the second oar, while double force seemed given to the long arms lately so weary, and both pulled on in silent, grim desperation. Ulysse had given one scream at seeing the last of the water swallowed, but he too understood the situation, and obeyed Arthur's brief words "Kneel down and pray for us, my boy."

The Abyssinian was evidently doing the same, after having loaded the blunderbuss; but it was no longer necessary to use this as a signal, since the frigate had lowered her boat, which was rapidly coming toward them.

But, alas! still more swiftly, as it seemed to those terrified eyes, came the Moorish boat—longer, narrower, more

favored by currents and winds, flying like a falcon toward its prey. It was a fearful race. Arthur's head began to swim, his breath to labor, his arms to move stiffly as a thresher's flail; but, just as power was failing him, an English cheer came over the waters, and restored strength for a few more resolute strokes.

Then came some puffs of smoke from the pirate's boat, a report, a jerk of their own, a fresh dash forward, even as Fareek fired, giving a moment's check to the enemy. There was a louder cheer, several shots from the English boat, a cloud from the ship's side. Then Arthur was sensible of a relaxation of effort, and that the chase was over, then that the British boat was alongside, friendly voices ringing in his ears, "How now, mates? Runaways, eh? Where d'ye hail from?"

"Scottish! British!" panted out Arthur, unable to utter more, faint, giddy, and astounded by the cheers around him, and the hands stretched out in welcome. He scarcely saw or understood.

"Queer customers here! What! a child! Who are you, my little man? And what's this? A Moor! He's hit—pretty hard, too."

This brought back Arthur's reeling senses in one flash of horror, at the sight of Tam, bleeding fast in the bottom of the boat.

"Oh, Tam! Tam! He saved me! He is Scottish too," cried Arthur. "Sir, is he alive?"

"I think so," said the officer, who had bent over Tam. "We'll have him aboard in a minute, and see what the doctor can do with him. You seem to have had a narrow escape."

Arthur was too busy endeavoring to stanch the blood which flowed fast from poor Tam's side to make much reply, but Ulysse, perched on the officer's knee, was answering for him in mixed English and French. "Moi, je suis le Chevalier de Bourke! My papa is embassador to Sweden. This gentleman is his secretary. We were shipwrecked—and Monsieur Arture and I swam away together. The Moors were good to us, and wanted to make us Moors: but Monsieur Arture said it would be wicked. And Yusuf bought him for a slave; but that was only from *faire la comedie*. He is *bon Chretien* after all, and so is poor Fareek, only he is dumb. Yusuf—that is, Tam—made me all black, and changed me for his little negro boy; and we got into the boat, and it was very hot, and oh! I am so thirsty. And now Monsieur Arture will take me to Monsieur mon Pere, and get me some nice clothes again," concluded the young gentleman, who, in this moment of re-

turn to civilized society, had become perfectly aware of his own rank and importance.

Arthur only looked up to verify the child's statements, which had much struck the lieutenant. Their boat had by this time been towed alongside of the frigate, and poor Tam was hoisted on board, and the surgeon was instantly at hand; but he said at once that the poor fellow was fast dying, and that it would be useless torture to carry him below for examination.

A few words passed with the captain, and then the little chevalier was led away to tell his own tale, which he was doing with a full sense of his own importance; but presently the captain returned, and beckoned to Arthur, who had been kneeling beside poor Tam, moistening his lips and bathing his face, as he lay gasping and apparently unconscious, except that he had gripped hold of his broad sash or girdle when it was taken off.

"The child tells me he is Comte de Bourke's son," said the captain, in a tentative manner, as if doubtful whether he should be understood, and certainly Arthur looked more Moorish than European.

"Yes, sir. He was on his way with his mother to join his father when we were taken by a Moorish corsair."

"But you are not French?" said the captain, recognizing the tones.

"No, sir; Scottish—Arthur Maxwell Hope. I was to have gone as the count's secretary."

"You have escaped from the Moors? I could not understand what the boy said. Where are the lady and the rest?"

Arthur as briefly as he could, for he was very anxious to return to poor Tam, explained the wreck and the subsequent adventures, saying that he feared the poor countess was lost, but that he had seen her daughter and some of her suit on a rock. Captain Beresford was horrified at the idea of a Christian child among the wild Arabs. His station was Minorca, but he had just been at the Bay of Rosas, where poor Comte de Bourke's anxiety and distress about his wife and children were known, and he had received a request amounting to orders to try to obtain intelligence about them, so that he held it to be within his duty to make at once for Djigheli Bay.

For further conversation was cut short by sounds of articulate speech from poor Tam. Arthur turned hastily, and the captain proceeded to give his orders.

"Is Maister Hope here?"

"Here! Yes. O Tam, dear Tam, if I could do anything!" cried Arthur.

"I canna see that well," said Tam, with a sound of anxiety. "Where's my sash?"

"This is it, in your own hand," said Arthur, thinking he was wandering, but the other hand sought one of the ample folds, which was sewn over, and weighty.

"Tak' it; tak' tent of it; ye'll need the siller. Four hundred piasters of Tunis, not countin' zecchins, and other sma' coin."

"Shall I send them to any one at Eyemouth?"

Tam almost laughed. "Na, na; keep them and use them yersell, sir. There's nane at hame that wad own puir Tam. The leddy, your mither, and you hae been mair to me than a' beside that's above ground, and what wad ye do wi'out the siller?"

"Oh, Tam! I owe all and everything to you. And now——"

Tam looked up, as Arthur's utterance was choked, and a great tear fell on his face. "Wha wad hae said," murmured he, "that a son of Burnside wad be greetin' for Partan Jeannie's son?"

"For my best friend! What have you not saved me from? and I can do nothing!"

"Nay, sir. Say but thae words again."

"Oh, for a clergyman! Or if I had a Bible to read you the promises."

"You shall have one," said the captain, who had returned to his side. The surgeon muttered that the lad seemed as good as a parson; but Arthur heard him not, and was saying what prayers came to his mind in this stress, when, even as the captain returned, the last struggle came on. Once more Tam looked up, saying, "Ye'll be good to puir Fareek;" and with a word more, "Oh, Christ: will he save such as I?" all was over.

"Come away, you can do nothing more," said the doctor. "You want looking to yourself."

For Arthur tottered as he tried to rise, and needed the captain's kind hand as he gained his feet. "Sir," he said, as the tears gushed to his eyes, "he *does* deserve all honor —my only friend and deliverer."

"I see," said Captain Beresford, much moved; "whatever he has been, he died a Christian. He shall have Christian burial. And this fellow?" pointing to poor Fareek, whose grief was taking vent in moans and sobs.

"Christian—Abyssinian, but dumb," Arthur explained; and having his promise that all respect should be paid to poor Tam's corpse, he let the doctor lead him away, for he had now time to feel how sun-scorched and exhausted he was, with giddy, aching head, and legs cramped and stiff, arms strained and shoulders painful after his three days

and nights of the boat. His thirst, too, seemed unquenchable, in spite of drinks almost unconsciously taken, and, though hungry, he had little will to eat.

The surgeon made him take a warm bath, and then fed him with soup, after which, on a promise of being called in due time, he consented to deposit himself in a hammock, and presently fell asleep.

When he awoke he found that clothes had been provided for him—naval uniforms; but that could not be helped, and the comfort was great. He was refreshed, but still very stiff. However, he dressed and was just ready, when the surgeon came to see whether he were in condition to be summoned, for it was near sundown, and all hands were piped up to attend poor Tam's funeral rites. His generous and faithful deed had eclipsed the memory that he was a renegade, and, indeed, it had been in such ignorance that he had had little to deny.

All the sailors stood as respectfully as if he had been one of themselves while the captain read a portion of the burial office. Such honors would never have been his in his native land, where at that time even Episcopalians themselves could not have ventured on any out-door rites; and Arthur was thus doubly struck and impressed, when, as the corpse, sewn in sail-cloth and heavily weighted, was launched into the blue waves, he heard the words committing the body to the deep till the sea should give up her dead, he longed to be able to translate them to poor Fareek, who was weeping and howling so inconsolably as to attest how good a master he had lost.

Perhaps Tam's newly-found or recovered Christianity might have been put to hard shocks as to the virtues he had learned among the Moslems. At any rate, Arthur often had reason to declare in after-life that the poor renegade might have put many a better-trained Christian to shame.

CHAPTER X.

ON BOARD THE CALYPSO.

"From whence this youth?
His country, name, and birth declared?"

Scott.

"You had forgotten this legacy, Mr. Hope," said Captain Beresford, taking Arthur into his cabin, "and, judging by its weight, it is hardly to be neglected. I put it into my locker for security."

"Thank you, sir," said Arthur. "The question is, whether I ought to take it? I wished for your advice."

"I heard what passed," said the captain. "I should

call your right as complete as if you had a will made by half a dozen lawyers. When we get into port, a few pounds to the ship's company to drink your health, and all will be right. Will you count it?"

The folds were undone, and little piles made of the gold, but neither the captain nor Arthur were much the wiser. The purser might have computed it, but Captain Beresford did not propose this, thinking, perhaps, that it was safer that no report of a treasure should get abroad in the ship.

He made a good many inquiries, which he had deferred till Arthur should be in a fitter condition for answering, first about the capture and wreck, and what the young man had been able to gather about the Cabeleyzes. Then, as the replies showed that he had a gentleman before him, Captain Beresford added that he could not help asking, "Que diable allait il faire dans cette galere?"

"Sir," said Arthur, "I do not know whether you will think it your duty to make me a prisoner, but I had better tell you the whole truth."

"Oho!" said the captain; "but you are too young! You could never have been out with—with—we'll call him the chevalier."

"I ran away from school," replied Arthur, coloring. "I was a mere boy, and I never was attainted," explained Arthur, blushing. "I have been with my Lord Nithsdale, and my mother thought I could safely come home, and that if I came from Sweden my brother could not think I compromised him."

"Your brother?"

"Lord Burnside. He is at court, in favor, they say, with King George. He is my half-brother; my mother is a Maxwell."

"There is a Hope in garrison at Port Mahon—a captain," said the captain. "Perhaps he will advise you what to do if you are sick of Jacobite intrigue and mystery, and ready to serve King George."

Arthur's face lighted up. "Will it be James Hope of Ryeland, or Dickie Hope of the Lynn, or——"

Captain Beresford held up his hands.

"Time must show that, my young friend," he said, smiling. "And now I think the officers expect you to join their mess in the gunroom."

There Arthur found the little chevalier strutting about in an adaptation of the smallest midshipman's uniform, and the center of an admiring party, who were equally diverted by his consequential airs and by his accounts of his sports among the Moors. Happy fellow, he could adapt himself to any society, and was ready to be the pet and plaything of the ship's company, believing himself,

when he thought of anything beyond the present, to be full on the road to his friends again.

Fareek was a much more difficult charge, for Arthur had hardly a word that he could understand. He found the poor fellow coiled up in a corner, just where he had seen his former master's remains disappear, still moaning and weeping bitterly. As Arthur called to him he looked up for a moment, then crawled forward, striking his forehead at intervals against the deck. He was about to kiss the feet of his former fellow-slave, the glittering gold, blue, and white of whose borrowed dress no doubt impressed him. Arthur hastily started back, to the amazement of the spectators, and called out a negative—one of the words sure to be first learned. He tried to take Fareek's hand and raise him from his abject attitude; but the poor fellow continued kneeling, and not only were no words available to tell him that he was free, but it was extremely doubtful whether freedom was any boon to him. One thing, however, he did evidently understand—he pointed to the St. George's pennant with the red cross, made the sign, looked an interrogation, and on Arthur's reply: "Christians," and reiteration of the word "Salaam," *peace*, he folded his arms and looked reassured.

"Ay, ay, my hearty," said the big boatswain, "ye've got under the old flag, and we'll soon make you see the difference. Cut out your poor tongue, have they, the rascals, and made a dummy of you? I wish my cat was about their ears! Come along with you, and you shall find what British grog is made of."

And a remarkable friendship arose between the two, the boatswain patronizing Fareek on every occasion, and roaring at him as if he were deaf as well as dumb, and Fareek appearing quite confident under his protection, and establishing a system of signs, which were fortunately a universal language. The Abyssinian evidently viewed himself as young Hope's servant or slave, probably thinking himself part of his late master's bequest, and there was no common language between them in which to explain the difference or ascertain the poor fellow's wishes. He was a slightly-made, dexterous man, probably about five-and-twenty years of age, and he caught up very quickly, by imitation, the care he could take of Arthur's clothes, and the habit of waiting on him at meals.

Meantime the Calypso held her course to the southeast, till the chart declared the coast to be that of Djigheli Bay, and Arthur recognized the headlands whither the unfortunate tartan had drifted to her destruction. Anchoring outside the bay, Captain Beresford sent the first lieutenant, Mr. Bullock, in the long boat, with Arthur and a well-

armed force, with instructions to offer no violence, but to reconnoiter; and if they found Mademoiselle de Bourke, or any others of the party, to do their best for their release by promises of ransom or representations of the consequences of detaining them. Arthur was prepared to offer his own piasters at once in case of need of immediate payment. He was by this time tolerably versed in the vernacular of the Mediterranean, and a cook's boy, shipped at Gibraltar, was also supposed to be capable of interpreting.

The beautiful bay, almost realizing the description of Æneas' landing-place, lay before them, the still, green waters within reflecting the fantastic rocks and the wreaths of verdure which crowned them, while the white mountain-tops rose like clouds in the far distance against the azure sky. Arthur could only, however, think of all this fair scene as a cruel prison, and those sharp rocks as the jaws of a trap, when he saw the ribs of the Tartan still jammed into the rock where she had struck, and where he had saved the two children as they were washed up the hatchway. He saw the rock where the other three had clung, and where he had left the little girl. He remembered the crowd of howling, yelling savages, leaping and gesticulating on the beach, and his heart trembled as he wondered how it had ended.

Where were the Cabeleyzes who had thus greeted them? The boy seemed perfectly lonely. Not a sound was to be heard but the regular dip of the oars, the cry of a startled bird, and the splash of a flock of seals, which had been sunning themselves on the shore, and which floundered into the sea like Proteus' flock of yore before Ulysses. Would that Proteus himself had still been there to be captured and interrogated! For the place was so entirely deserted that, saving for the remains of the wreck, he must have believed himself mistaken in the locality, and the lieutenant began to question him whether it had been daylight when he came ashore.

Could the natives have hidden themselves at sight of an armed vessel? Mr. Bullock resolved on landing, very cautiously, and with a sufficient guard. On the shore some fragments of broken boxes and packing-cases appeared; and a sailor pointed out the European lettering painted on one— . . . sse de B . . . It plainly was part of the address of the Comtesse de Bourke. This encouraged the party in their search. They ascended the path which poor Hebert and Lanty Callaghan had so often painfully climbed, and found themselves before the square of reed hovels, also deserted, but with black marks where fires had been lighted, and with traces of recent habitation.

Arthur picked up a rag of the Bourke livery, and another of a brocade which he had seen the poor countess wearing. Was this all the relic that he should ever be able to take to her husband?

He peered about anxiously in hopes of discovering further tokens, and Mr. Bullock was becoming impatient of his lingering, when suddenly his eyes was struck by a score on the bark of a chestnut-tree like a cross, cut with a feeble hand. Beneath, close to the trunk, was a stone, beyond the corner of which appeared a bit of paper. He pounced upon it. It was the title-page of Estelle's precious Telemaque, and on the back was written in French, "If any good Christian ever finds this, I pray him to carry it to Monsieur the French Consul at Algiers. We are five poor prisoners, the Abbe de St. Eudoce, Estelle, daughter of the Comte de Bourke, and our servants, Jacques Hebert, Laurent Callaghan, Victorine Renouf. The Cabeleyzes are taking us away to their mountains. We are in slavery, in hunger, filth, and deprivation of all things. We pray day and night that the good God will send some one to rescue us, for we are in great misery, and they persecute us to make us deny our faith. Oh, whoever you may be, come and deliver us while we are yet alive."

Arthur was almost choked with tears as he translated this piteous letter to the lieutenant, and recollected the engaging, enthusiastic little maiden, as he had seen her on the Rhone, but now brought to such a state. He implored Mr. Bullock to pursue the track up the mountain, and was grieved at this being treated as absurdly impossible, but then recollecting himself, "You could not, sir, but I might follow her and make them understand that she must be saved——"

"And give them another captive," said Bullock; "I thought you had had enough of that. You will do more good to this flame of yours——"

"No flame, sir. She is a mere child, little older than her brother. But she must not remain among these lawless savages."

"No! But we don't throw the helve after the hatchet, my lad! All you can do is to take this epistle to the French consul, who might find it hard to understand without your explanations. At any rate, my orders are to bring you safe on board again."

Arthur had no choice but to submit, and Captain Beresford, who had a wife and children at home, was greatly touched by the sight of the childish writing of the poor little motherless girl; above all when Arthur explained that the high-sounding title of Abbe de St. Eudoce only

meant one who was more likely to be a charge than a help to her.

France was for the nonce allied with England, and the dread of passing to Sweden through British seas had apparently been quite futile, since, if Captain Beresford recollected the Irish blood of the count, it was only as an additional cause for taking interest in him. Toward the Moorish pirates the interest of the two nations united them. It was intolerable to think of the condition of the captives; and the captain, anxious to lose no time, rejoiced that his orders were such as to justify him in sailing at once for Algiers to take effectual measures with the consul before letting the family know the situation of the poor Demoiselle de Bourke.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PIRATE CITY.

"With dazed vision unawares
From the long alley's latticed shade
Emerged, I came upon the great
Pavilion of the Caliphat.
Right to the carven cedarn doors,
Flung inward over spangled floors,
Broad-based flights of marble stairs
Ran up with golden balustrade,
After the fashion of the time,
And humor of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid."

Tennyson.

CIVILIZED and innocuous existence has, no doubt, been a blessing to Algiers as well as to the entire Mediterranean, but it has not improved the picturesqueness of its aspect any more than the wild and splendid "tiger, tiger burning bright," would be more ornamental with his claws pared, the fiery gleam of his yellow eyes quenched, and his spirit tamed, so as to render him only an exaggerated domestic cat. The steamer, whether of peace or war, is a melancholy substitute for the splendid though sinister galley, with her ranks of oars and towers of canvas, or for the dainty, lateen-sailed vessels, skimming the waters like flying-fish, and the Frank garb ill replaces the graceful Arab dress. The Paris-like block of houses ill replaces the graceful Moorish architecture, undisturbed when the Calypso sailed into the harbor, and the amphitheater-like city rose before her, in successive terraces of dazzling white, interspersed with palms and other trees here and there, with mosques and minarets rising above them, and with a crown of strong fortifications. The harbor itself was protected by a strongly-fortified mole, and some parley passed with the governor of the strong and grim-looking castle adja-

cent—a huge round tower erected by the Spaniards, and showing three ranks of brazen teeth in the shape of guns.

Finally, the Algerines, having been recently brought to their bearings, as Captain Beresford said, entrance was permitted, and the Calypso enjoyed the shelter of the mole; while he, in full-dress uniform, took boat and went ashore, and with him the two escaped prisoners. Fareek remained on board till the English consul could be consulted on his fate.

England and France were on curious terms with Algiers. The French had bombarded the city in 1686, and had obtained a treaty by which a consul constantly resided in the city, and the persons and property of French subjects were secured from piracy, or if captured were always released. The English had made use of the possession of Gibraltar and Minorca to enforce a like treaty. There was a little colony of European merchants—English, French, and Dutch—in the lower town, near the harbor, above which the Arab town rose, as it still rises, in a steep stair. Ships of all these nations traded at the port, and quite recently the English consul, Thomas Thompson by name, had vindicated the honor of his flag by citing before the dey a man who had insulted him on the narrow causeway of the mole. The Moor was sentenced to receive twenty-two hundred strokes of bastinado on the feet—one thousand the first day, twelve hundred on the second; and he died in consequence, so that Englishmen safely walked the narrow streets. The dey who had inflicted this punishment was, however, lately dead. Mehemed had been elected and installed by the chief janizaries, and it remained to be proved whether he would show himself equally anxious to be on good terms with the Christian powers.

Arthur's heart had learned to beat at sight of the British ensign with emotions very unlike those with which he had seen it wave at Sheriffmuir; but it looked strange above the low walls of a Moorish house, plain outside, but with a richly cusped and painted horseshoe arch at the entrance to a lovely cloistered court, with a sparkling fountain surrounded by orange-trees with fruit of all shades from green to gold. Servants in white garments and scarlet fezzes, black, brown, or white (by courtesy), seemed to swarm in all directions; and one of them called a youth in European garb, but equally dark-faced with the rest, and not too good an English scholar. However, he conducted them through a still more beautiful court, lined with brilliant mosaics in the spandrels of the exquisite arches supported on slender, shining marble columns.

Mr. Thompson's English coat and hearty English face

looked incongruous, as at sight of the blue-and-white uniform he came forward with all the hospitable courtesy due to a post-captain. There was shaking of hands, and doffing of cocked hats, and calling for wines and pipes and coffee, in the Alhambra-like hall, where a table covered with papers tied with red tape, in front of a homely leathern chair, looked more homelike than suitable. Other chairs there were for Frank guests, who preferred them to the divan and piles of cushions on which the Moors transacted business.

"What can I do for you, sir?" he asked of the captain, "or for this little master," he added, looking at Ulysse, who was standing by Arthur. "He is serving the king early."

"I don't belong to your King George," broke out the young gentleman. "He is an *usurpateur*. I have only this uniform on till I can get my proper clothes. I am the son of the Comte de Bourke, embassador to Spain and Sweden. I serve no one but King Louis!"

"That is plain to be seen," said Mr. Thompson. "The Gallic cock crows early. But is he indeed the son of Count Bourke about whom the French consul has been in such trouble?"

"Even so, sir," replied the captain. "I am come to ask you to present him, with this gentleman, Mr. Hope, to your French colleague. Mr. Hope, to whom the child's life and liberty are alike owing, has information to give which may lead to the rescue of the boy's sister and uncle, with their servants."

Mr. Thompson had heard of a Moorish galley coming in with an account of having lost a Genoese prize, with ladies on board, in the late storm. He was sure that the tidings Mr. Hope brought would be most welcome, but he knew that the French consul was gone up with a distinguished visitor, Monsieur Dessault, for an audience of the dey; and, in the meantime, his guests must dine with him. And Arthur narrated his adventures.

The consul shook his head when he heard of Djigheli Bey.

"Those fellows, the Cabeleyzes, hate the French, and make little enough of the dey, though they do send home Moors who fall into their hands. Did you see a ruined fort on a promontory? That was the Bastion de France. The old King Louis put it up and garrisoned it, but those rogues contrived a surprise and made four hundred prisoners, and ever since they have been neither to have nor to hold. Well for you, young gentleman, that you did not fall into their hands, but those of the country Moors—very decent folk—descended, they say, from the Spanish Moors.

A renegade got you off, did he? Yes, they will sometimes do that, though at an awful risk, If they are caught they are hung up alive on hooks to the walls. You had an escape, I can tell you, and so had he, poor fellow, of being taken alive."

"He knew the risk ," said Arthur, in a low voice; "but my mother had once been good to him, and he dared everything for me."

The consul readily estimated Arthur's legacy as amounting to little less than £200, and was also ready to give him bills of exchange for it. The next question was as to Fareek. To return him to his own country was impossible; and though the consul offered to buy him of Arthur, not only did the young Scot revolt at the idea of making traffic of the faithful fellow, but Mr. Thompson owned that there might be some risk in Algiers of his being recognized as a runaway; and, though this was very slight, it was better not to give any cause of offense.

Captain Beresford thought the poor man might be disposed of at Port Mahon, and Arthur kept to himself that Tam's bequest was sacred to him. His next wish was for clothes to which he might have a better right than to the uniform of the senior midshipman of H.M.S. Calypso—a garb in which he did not like to appear before the French consul. Mr. Thompson consulted his Greek clerk, and a chest belonging to a captured merchantman, which had been claimed as British property, but had not found an owner, was opened, and proved to contain a wardrobe sufficent to equip Arthur like other gentlemen of the day, in a dark crimson coat, with a little gold lace about it, and the rest of the dress white, a wide beaver hat, looped up with a rosette, and everything, indeed, except shoes, and he was obliged to retain those of the senior midshipman. With his black hair tied back, and a suspicion of powder, he found himself more like the youth whom Lady Nithsdale had introduced in Madame de Varennes' *salon* than he had felt for the last month; and moreover his shyness and awkwardness had in great measure disappeared during his vicissitudes, and he had made many steps toward manhood.

Ulysse had in the meantime been consigned to the kind, motherly, portly Mrs. Thompson, who, accustomed as she was to hearing of strange adventures, was aghast at what the child had undergone, and was enchanted with the little French gentleman who spoke English so well, and to whom his grand-seigneur airs returned by instinct in contact with a European lady; but his eye instantly sought Arthur, nor would he be content without a seat next to his protector at the dinner, early as were all dinners then, and

a compound of Eastern and Western dishes, the latter very welcome to the travelers, and affording the consul's wife themes of discourse on her difficulties in compounding them.

Pipes, siesta, and coffee followed, Mr. Thompson assuring them that his French colleague wonld not be ready to receive them till after the like repose had been undergone, and that he had already sent a billet to announce their coming.

The French consulate was not distant. The *fleur-de-lis* waved over a house similar to Mr. Thompson's, but they were admitted with greater ceremony, when Mr. Thompson at length conducted them. Servants and slaves, brown and black, clad in white with blue sashes, and white officials in blue liveries, were drawn up in the first court in two lines to receive them; and the chevalier, taking it all to himself, paraded in front with the utmost grandeur, until, at the next archway, two gentlemen, resplendent in gold lace, came forward with low bows. At sight of the little fellow there were cries of joy. Monsieur Dessault spread out his arms, clasped the child to his breast, and shed tears over him, so that the less emotional Englishman thought at first that they must be kinsmen. However, Arthur came in for a like embrace, as the boy's preserver; and if Captain Beresford had not stepped back and looked uncomprehending and rigid he might have come in for the same.

Seated in the veranda, Arthur told his tale and presented the letter, over which there were more tears; as, indeed, well there might be over the condition of the little girl and her simple mode of describing it. It was nearly a month since the corsair had arrived, and the story of the Genoese tartan being captured and lost, with French ladies on board, had leaked out. The French consul had himself seen and interrogated the Dutch renegade captain, had become convinced of the identity of the unfortunate passengers, and had given up all hopes of them, so that he greeted the boy as one risen from the dead.

To know that the boy's sister and uncle were still in the hands of the Cabeleyzes was almost worse news than the death of his mother, for this wild Arab tribe had a terrible reputation even among the Moors and Turks.

The only thing that could be devised after consultation between the two consuls, the French envoy, and the English captain, was that an audience should be demanded of the dey, and Estelle's letter presented, the next morning. Meanwhile Arthur and Ulysse were to remain as guests at the English consulate. The French one would have made them welcome, but there was no lady in his house; and

Mrs. Thompson had given Arthur a hint that his little charge would be the better for womanly care.

There was further consultation whether young Hope, as a runaway slave—who had, however, carried off a relapsed renegade with him—would be safe on shore beyond the precincts of the consulate; but as no one had any claim on him, and it might be desirable to have his evidence at hand, it was thought safe that he should remain, and Captain Beresford promised to come ashore in the morning to join the petitioners to the dey.

Perhaps he was not sorry, any more than was Arthur, for the opportunity of beholding the wonderful city and palace, which were like a dream of beauty. He came ashore early, with two or three officers, all in full uniform; and, the audience having been granted, the whole party—consuls, Monsieur Dessault, and their attendants—mounted the steep, narrow stone steps leading up the hill between the walls of houses with fantastically carved doorways or lattices; while bare-legged Arabs niched themselves into every coign of vantage with baskets of fruit or eggs, or else embroidering pillows and slippers with exquisite taste.

The beauty of the buildings was unspeakable, and they projected enough to make a cool shade—only a narrow fragment of deep-blue sky being visible above them. The party did not, however, ascend the whole four hundred and ninety-seven steps, as the abode of the dey was then not the citadel, but the palace of Djenina, in the heart of the city. Turning aside, they made their way thither over terraces partly in the rock, partly on the roofs of houses.

Fierce-looking janizaries, splendidly equipped, guarded the entrance, with an air so proud and consequential as to remind Arthur of poor Yusuf's assurances of the manificence that might await little Ulysse as an aga of that corps. Even as they admitted the infidels, they looked defiance at them from under the manifold snowy folds of their mighty turbans.

If the beauty of the counsuls' houses had struck and startled Arthur, far more did the region into which he was now admitted seem like a dream of fairy-land as he passed through ranks of orange-trees round sparkling fountains—worthy of Versailles itself—courts surrounded with cloisters, sparkling with priceless mosaics, in those brilliant colors which Eastern taste alone can combine so as to avoid gaudiness, arches and columns of ineffable grace and richness, halls with domes emulating the sky, or else ceiled with white marble lacework, whose tracery seemed delicate and varied as the richest Venice point! But the won-

derful beauty seemed to him to have in it something terrible and weird, like that fairy-land of his native country, whose glory and charm are overshadowed by the knowledge of the teinds to be paid to hell. It was an unnatural, incomprehensible world; and from longing to admire and examine he only wished to be out of it, felt it a relief to fix his eyes upon the uniforms of the captain and the consuls, and did not wonder that Ulysse, instead of proudly heading the procession, shrank up to him and clasped his hand as his protector.

The human figures were as strange as the architecture; the glittering of janizaries in the outer court, which seemed a sort of guardroom, the lines of those on duty in the next, and in the third court the black slaves in white garments, enhancing the blackness of their limbs, each with a formidable curved cimeter. At the golden cusped archway beyond, all had to remove their shoes as though entering a mosque. The consuls bade the new-comers submit to this, adding that it was only since the recent victory that it had not been needful to lay aside the sword on entering the dey's august presence. The chamber seemed to the eyes of the strangers one web of magic splendor—gold-crusted lacework above, arches on one side open to a beauteous garden, and opposite semi-circles of richly-robed janizary officers, all culminating in a dazzling throne, where sat a white-turbaned figure, before whom the visitors all had to bow lower than European independence could well brook.

The dey's features were not very distinctly seen at the distance where etiquette required them to stand; but Arthur thought him hardly worthy to be master of such fine-looking beings as Abou Ben Zegri and many others of the Moors, being in fact a little sturdy Turk, with Tartar features, not nearly so graceful as the Moors and Arabs, nor so handsome and imposing as the janizaries of Circassian blood.

Turkish was the court language, and even if he understood any other, an interpreter was a necessary part of the etiquette. Monsieur Dessault instructed the interpreter, who understood with a readiness which betrayed that he was one of the many renegades in the Algerine service.

The dey was too dignified to betray much emotion; but he spoke a few words, and these were understood to profess his willingness to assist in the matter. A richly clad official, who was, Mr. Thompson whispered, a secretary of state, came to attend the party in a smaller but equally beautiful room, where pipes and coffee were served, and a consultation took place with the two consuls, which was, of course, incomprehensible to the anxious listeners. Monsieur Dessault's interest was deeply concerned in the mat-

ter, since he was a connection of the Varennes family, to which poor Madame de Bourke belonged.

Commands from the dey, it was presently explained, would be utterly disregarded by these wild mountaineers—nay, would probably lead to the murder of the captives in defiance. But it was known that if these wild beings paid deference to any one, it was to the Grand Marabout at Bugia; and the secretary promised to send a letter in the dey's name, which, with a considerable present, might induce him to undertake the negotiation. Therewith the audience terminated, after Monsieur Dessault had laid a splendid diamond snuff-box at the feet of the secretary.

The consuls were somewhat disgusted at the notion of having recourse to the Marabouts, whom the French consul called *vilains charlatan*, and the English one filthy scoundrels and impostors. Like the Indian fakirs, opined Captain Beresford; like the begging friars, said Monsieur Dessault, and to this the consuls assented. Just, however, as the Dominicans, besides the low class of barefooted friars, had a learned and cultivated set of brethren in high repute at the universities, and a general at Rome, so it appeared that the Marabouts, besides their wild crew of masterful beggars, living at free quarters, partly through pretended sanctity, partly through the awe inspired by cabalistic arts, had a higher class who dwelt in cities, and were highly esteemed, for the sake of either ten years' abstinence from food or the attainment of fifty sciences, by one or other of which means an angelic nature was held to be attained.

Fifty sciences! This greatly astonished the strangers, but they were told by the residents that all the knowledge of the highly cultivated Arabs of Bagdad and the Moors of Spain had been handed on to the select few of their African descendants, and that really beautiful poetry was still produced by the Marabouts. Certainly no one present could doubt of the architectural skill and taste of the Algerines, and Mr. Thompson declared that not a tithe of the wonders of their mechanical art had been seen, describing the wonderful silver tree of Tlemcen, covered with birds, who, by the action of wind, were made to produce the songs of each different species which they represented, till a falcon on the topmost branch uttered a harsh cry, and all became silent.

General education had, however, fallen to a low ebb among the population, and the wisdom of the ancients was chiefly concentrated among the higher class of Marabouts, whose headquarters were at Bugia, and their present chief, Hadji Eseb Ben Hassan, had the reputation of a saint, which the consuls believed to be well founded.

The Cabeleyzes, though most irregular Mosiems, were extremely superstitious as regarded the supernatural arts supposed to be possessed by the Marabouts, and if these could be induced to take up the cause of the prisoners, there would be at least *some* chance of their success.

And not long after the party had arrived at the French consulate, where they were to dine, a messenger arrived with a parcel rolled up in silk, embroidered with gold, and containing a strip of paper beautifully emblazoned, and in Turkish characters. The consul read it, and found it to be a really strong recommendation to the Marabout to do his utmost for the servants of the dey's brother, the King of France, now in the hands of the children of Shaitan.

"Well purchased," said Monsieur Dessault; "though that snuff-box came from the hands of the Elector of Bavaria!"

As soon as the meal was over, the French consul, instead of taking his siesta as usual, began to take measures for chartering a French tartan to go to Bugia immediately. He found there was great interest excited, not only among the Christian merchants, but among Turks, Moors, and Jews, so horrible was the idea of captivity among the Cabeleyzes. The dey set the example of sending down five purses of sequins toward the young lady's ransom, and many more contributions came in unasked. It was true that the bearers expected no small consideration in return, but this was willingly given, and the feeling manifested was a perfect astonishment to all the friends at the consulate.

The French national intepreter, Ibrahim Aga, was charged with the negotiations with the Marabout. Arthur entreated to go with him, and with some hesitation this was agreed to, since the sight of an old friend might be needed to reassure any survivors of the poor captives—for it was hardly thought possible that all could still survive the hardships of the mountains in the depth of winter, even if they were spared by the ferocity of their captors.

Ulysse, the little son and heir, was not to be exposed to the perils of the seas till his sister's fate was decided, and accordingly he was to remain under the care of Mrs. Thompson; while Captain Beresford meant to cruise about in the neighborhood, having a great desire to know the result of the enterprise, and hoping also that if Mademoiselle de Bourke still lived he might be permitted to restore her to her relations. Letters, clothes, and comforts were provided, and placed under the charge of the interpreter and of Arthur, together with a considerable gratuity for the

Marabout, and authority for any ransom that Cabeleyze rapacity might require—still, however, with great doubt whether all might not be too late.

CHAPTER XII.

ON THE MOUNTAINS.

"We cannot miss him. He doth make our fire,
Fetch in our wood, and serve in offices
That profit us." *Tempest.*

BUGIA, though midway on the "European lake," is almost unknown to modern travelers, though it has become a French possession.

It looked extremely beautiful when the French tartan entered it, rising from the sea like a magnificent amphitheater, at the foot of the mountains that circled round it, and guarded by stern battlemented castles, while the arches of one of the great old Roman acqueducts made a noble chord to the arch described by the lower part of the town.

The harbor, a finer one naturally than that of Algiers, contained numerous tartans and other vessels, for, as Ibrahim Aga, who could talk French very well, informed Arthur, the inhabitants were good workers in iron, and drove a trade in plowshares and other implements, besides wax and oil. But it was no resort of Franks, and he insisted that Arthur should only come on shore in a Moorish dress, which had been provided at Algiers. Thanks to young Hope's naturally dark complexion and the exposure of the last month, he might very well pass for a Moor; and he had learned to wear the white caftan, wide trousers, broad sash, and scarlet fez circled with muslin so naturally that he was not likely to be noticed as a European.

The city, in spite of its external beauty, proved to be ruinous within, and in the midst of the Moorish houses and courts still were visible remnants of the old Roman town that had in past ages flourished there. Like Algiers, it had narrow, climbing streets, excluding sunshine, and through these the guide Ibrahim had secured led the way; while in single file came the interpreter, Arthur, two black slaves bearing presents for the Marabout, and four men besides as escort. Once or twice there was a vista down a broader space, with an awning over it, where selling and buying were going on, always of some single species of merchandise.

Thus they arrived at one of those Moorish houses to whose beauty Arthur was becoming accustomed. It had, however, a less luxurious and graver aspect than the palaces of Algiers, and the green color sacred to the

prophet prevailed in the inlaid work, which Ibrahim Aga told him consisted chiefly of maxims from the Koran.

No soldiers were on guard, but there were a good many young men wholly clad in white—neophytes endeavoring to study the fifty sciences, mostly sitting on the ground, writing copies, either of the sacred books or of the treatises on science and medicine which had descended from time almost immemorial; all rehearsed aloud what they learned or wrote, so as to produce a strange hum. A grave official, similarly clad, but with a green sash, came to meet them, and told them that the chief Marabout was sick; but on hearing from the interpreter that they were bearers of a letter from the dey, he went back with the intelligence, and presently returned salaaming very low, to introduce them to another of the large halls with lacework ceilings, where it was explained that the grand Marabout was, who was suffering from ague. The fit was passing off, and he would be able to attend to his honored guests as soon as they had partaken of the coffee and the pipes which were presented to them.

After a delay, very trying to Arthur's anxiety, though beguiled by such coffee and tobacco as he was never likely to encounter again, Hadji Eseb Ben Hassan, a venerable-looking man, appeared, with a fine white beard, and keen eyes, slenderly formed, and with an air of very considerable ability—much more so than the dey, in all his glittering splendor of gold, jewels, and embroidery, whereas this old man wore the pure white woolen garments of the Moor, with the green sash, and an emerald to fasten the folds of his white turban.

Ibrahim Aga prostrated himself as if before the dey, and laid before the Marabout, as a first gift, a gold watch; then, after a blessing had been given in return, he produced with great ceremony the dey's letter, to which every one in the apartment did obeisance by touching the floor with their foreheads, and the Grand Marabout further rubbed it on his brow before proceeding to read it, which he chose to do for himself, chanting it out in a low, humming voice. It was only a recommendation, and the other letter was from the French consul containing all particulars. The Marabout seemed much startled, and interrogated the interpreter. Arthur could follow them in some degree, and presently the keen eye of the old man seemed to detect his interest, for there was a pointing to him, an explanation that he had been there, and presently Hadji Eseb addressed a question to him in the vernacular Arabic. He understood and answered, but the imperfect language or his looks betrayed him, for Hadji Eseb demanded, "Thou art Frank, my son?"

Ibrahim Aga, mortally afraid of the consequences of having brought a disguised Giaour into these sacred precincts, began what Arthur perceived to be a lying assurance of his having embraced Islam; and he was on the point of breaking in upon the speech, when the Marabout observed his gesture, and said, gravely, "My son, falsehood is not needed to shield a brave Christian; a faithful worshipper of Issa Ben Mariam receives honor if he does justice and works righteousness according to his own creed, even though he be blind to the true faith. It is true, good youth, that thou art not—as this man would have me believe—one of the crew from Algiers, but art come to strive for the release of thy sister?"

Arthur gave the history as best he could, for his month's practice had made him able to speak the vernacular so as to be fairly comprehensible, and the Marabout, who was evidently a man of very high abilities, often met him half-way, and suggested the word at which he stumbled. He was greatly touched by the account, even in the imperfect manner in which the youth could give it; and there was no doubt that he was a man of enlarged mind and beneficence, who had not only mastered the fifty sciences, but had seen something of the world. He had not only made his pilgrimage to Mecca more than once, but had been at Constantinople, and likewise at Tunis and Tripoli; thus, with powers both acute and awke, he understood more than his countrymen of European powers and their relation to one another. As a civilized and cultivated man he was horrified at the notion of the tenderly-nurtured child being in the clutches of savages like the Cabeleyzes; but the first difficulty was to find out where she was; for, as he said, pointing toward the mountains, they were a wide space, and it would be like hunting a partridge on the hills.

Looking at his chief councillor, Azim Reverdi, he demanded whether some of the wanderers of their order, whom he named, could not be sent through the mountains to discover where any such prisoners might be; but after going into the court in quest of these persons, Azim returned with tidings that a Turkish soldier had returned on the previous day to the town, and had mentioned that on Mount Couco, Sheik Abderrahman was almost at war with his subordinates, Eyoub and Ben Yakoub, about some shipwrecked Frank captives, if they had not already settled the matter by murdering them all, and, as was well known, this ignorant, lawless tribe could not be persuaded that nothing was more abhorrent to the prophet than human sacrifices.

Azim had already sent two disciples to summon the Turk to the presence of the Grand Marabout, and in due time he

appeared—a rough, heavy, truculent fellow enough, but making awkward salaams as one in great awe of the presence in which he stood; unwilling awe, perhaps—full of superstitious fear tempered by pride—for the haughty Turks revolted against homage to one of the subject race of Moors.

His language was only now and then comprehensible to Arthur, but Ibrahim kept up a running translation into French for his benefit.

There were captives—infidels—saved from the wreck, he knew not how many—but he was sure of one—a little maid with hair like the unwound cocoon, so that they called her the Daughter of the Silkworm. It was about her that the chief struggle was. She had fallen to the lot of Ben Yakoub, who had been chestnut-gathering by the sea at the time of the wreck; but when they arrived at Mount Couco the Sheik Abderrahman had claimed her and hers as the head of the tribe, and had carried her off to his own adowara in the valley of Ein Gebel.

The Turk, Murad, had been induced by Yakoub to join him and sixteen more armed men whom he had got together to demand her. For it was he who had rescued her from the waves, carried her up the mountains, fed her all this time, and he would not have her snatched away from him, though for his part Murad thought it would have been well to be quit of them, for not only were they Giaours, but he verily believed them to be of the race of Jinns. The little fair-haired maid had papers with strange signs on them. She wrote—actually wrote—a thing that he believed no Sultana Velide even had ever been known to do at Stamboul. Moreover, she twisted strings about on her hands in a manner that was fearful to look at. It was said to be only to amuse the children, but for his part he believed it was for some evil spell. What was certain was that the other, a woman full grown, could, whenever any one offended her, raise a Jinn in a cloud of smoke, which caused such a sneezing that she was lost sight of.

And yet these creatures had so bewitched their captors that there were like to be hard blows before they were disposed of, unless his advice were taken to make an end of them altogether. Indeed, two of the men, the mad Santon and the chief slave, had been taken behind a bush to be sacrificed, when the Daughter of the Silkworm came between with her incantations, and fear came upon Sheik Yakoub. Murad evidently thought it highly advisable that the chief Marabout should interfere to put a stop to these doings, and counteract the mysterious influence exercised by these strange beings.

High time, truly, Arthur and Ibrahim Aga likewise felt it, to go to the rescue, since terror and jealousy might, it appeared, at any time impel *ces barbares feroces*, as Ibrahim called them, to slaughter their prisoners. To their great joy, the Marabout proved to be of the same opinion, in spite of his sickness, which, being an intermitting ague, would leave him free for a couple of days, and might be driven off by the mountain air. He promised to set forth early the next day, and kept the young man and the interpreter as his guests for the night, Ibrahim going first on board to fetch the parcel of clothes and provisions which Monsieur Dessault had sent for the abbe and Mademoiselle de Bourke, and for an installment of the ransom, which the Hadji Eseb assured him might safely be carried under his own sacred protection.

Arthur did not see much of his host, who seemed to be very busy consulting with his second in command on the preparations, for probably the expedition was a delicate undertaking, even for him, and his companions had to be carefully chosen.

Ibrahim had advised Arthur to stay quietly where he was, and not to venture into the city, and he spent his time as best he might by the help of a *narghile*, which was hospitably presented to him, though the strictness of Marabout life forbade the use alike of tobacco and coffee.

Before dawn the courts of the house were astir. Mules, handsomely trapped, were provided to carry the principal persons of the party wherever it might be possible, and there were some spare ones, ridden at first by inferiors, but intended for the captives, should they be recovered.

It was very cold, being the last week in November, and all were wrapped in heavy woolen haiks over their white garments, except one wild-looking fellow, whose legs and arms were bare, and who only seemed to possess one garment of coarse, dark sackcloth. He skipped and ran by the side of the mules, chanting and muttering, and Ibrahim observed in French that he was one of the Sunakites, or fanatic Marabouts, and advised Arthur to beware of him; but, though dangerous in himself, his presence would be a sufficient protection from all other thieves or vagabonds. Indeed, Arthur saw the fellow glaring unpleasantly at him, when the sun summoned all the rest to their morning devotions. He was glad that he had made the fact of his Christianity known, for he could no more act Moslem than *be* one, and Hadji Eseb kept the Sunakite in check by a stern glance, so that no harm ensued.

Afterward Arthur was bidden to ride near the chief, who talked a good deal, asking intelligent questions. Gibraltar

had impressed him greatly, and it also appeared that in one of his pilgrimages the merchant vessel he was in had been rescued from some Albanian pirates by an English ship, which held the Turks as allies, and thus saved them from undergoing vengeance for the sufferings of the Greeks. Thus the good old man felt that he owed a debt of gratitude which Allah required him to pay, even to the infidel.

Up steep roads the mules climbed. The first night the halt was at a Cabyle village, where hospitality was eagerly offered to persons of such high reputation for sanctity as the Marabouts; but afterward habitations grew more scanty as the ground rose higher, and there was no choice but to encamp in the tents brought by the attendants, and which seemed to Arthur a good exchange for the dirty Cabyle huts.

Altogether the journey took six days. The mules climbed along wild paths on the verge of giddy precipices, where even on foot Arthur would have hesitated to venture. The scenery would now be thought magnificent, but it was simply frightful to the mind of the early eighteenth century, especially when a constant watch had to be kept to avoid the rush of stones, or avalanches, on an almost imperceptible, nearly perpendicular path, where it was needful to trust to the guidance of the Sunakite, the only one of the cavalcade who had been there before.

On the last day they found themselves on the borders of a slope of pines and other mountain-growing trees, bordering a wide valley or ravine where the Sunakite hinted that Abderrahman might be found.

The cavalcade pursued a path slightly indicated by the treading of feet and hoofs, and presently there emerged on them from a slighter side-track between the red stems of the great pines a figure nearly bent double under the weight of two huge fagots, with a basket of great solid fir-cones on the top of them. Very scanty garments seemed to be vouchsafed to him, and the bare arms and legs were so white, as well as of a length so unusual among Arabs or Moors, that simultaneously the Marabout exclaimed, "One of the Giaour captives," and Arthur cried out, "*La Jeunesse!* Laurence!"

There was only just time for a start and a response, "Monsieur Arture! And is it yourself?" before a howl of vituperation was heard—of abuse of all the ancestry of the cur of an infidel slave, the father of tardiness—and a savage-looking man appeared, brandishing a cudgel, with which he was about to belabor his unfortunate slave, when he was arrested by astonishment, and perhaps terror, at the goodly company of Marabouts. Hadji Eseb en-

tered into conversation with him, and meanwhile Lanty broke forth, "O wirrah, wirrah, Master Arthur! an' have they made a haythen Moor of ye? By the powers, but this is worse than all. What will mademoiselle say?—she that has held up the faith of every one of us, like a little saint and martyr as she is! Though, to be sure, ye are but a Protestant; only these folks don't know the differ."

"If you would let me speak, Laurence," said Arthur, "you would hear that I am no more a Moslem than yourself, only my Frank dress might lead to trouble. We are come to deliver you all, with a ransom from the French consul. Are you all safe—mademoiselle and all? and how many of you?"

"Mademoiselle and Monsieur l'Abbe were safe and well three days since," said Lanty; "but that spalpeen there is my master and poor Victorine's, and will not let us put a foot near them."

"Where are they? How many?" anxiously asked Arthur.

"There are five of us altogether," said Lanty; "praise be to Him who has saved us thus far. We know the touch of cold steel at our throats, as well as ever I knew the poor misthress' handbell; and unless our lady, and St. Lawrence, and the rest of them keep the better watch on us, the rascals will only ransom us without our heads, so jealous and bloodthirsty they are. The Bey of Constantina sent for us once, but all we got by that was worse usage than the very dogs in Paris, and been dragged up these weary hills, where Maitre Hebert and I carried mademoiselle every foot of the way on our backs, and she begging our pardon so prettily—only she could not walk, the rocks had so bruised her darlin' little feet."

"This is their chief holy man, Lanty. If any one can prevail on these savages to release you it is he."

"And how come you to be hand and glove with them, Master Arthur—you that I thought drownded with poor madame and the little chevalier and the rest?"

"The chevalier is not drowned, Laurent. He is safe in the consul's house at Algiers."

"Now, Heaven and all the saints be praised! The chevalier safe and well! 'Tis a very miracle!" cried Lanty, letting fall his burden, as he clasped his hands in ecstasy and performed a caper which, in spite of all his master Eyoub's respect for the Marabouts, brought a furious yell of rage, and a tremendous blow with the cudgel, which Lanty, in his joy, seemed to receive as if it had been a feather.

Hadji Eseb averted a further blow; and understanding from Arthur that the poor fellow's transport was caused

by the tidings of the safety of his master's son, he seemed touched, and bade that he and Eyoub should lead the way to the place of durance of the chief prisoners. On the way Ibrahim Aga interrogated both Eyoub in vernacular Arabic and Lanty in French. The former was sullen, only speaking from his evident awe of the Marabouts, the latter voluble with joy and hope.

Arthur learned that the letter he had found under the stone was the fourth that Estelle and Hebert had written. There had been a terrible journey up the mountains, when Lanty had fully thought Victorine must close her sufferings in some frightful ravine; but, nevertheless, she had recovered health and strength with every day's ascent above the close, narrow valley. They were guarded all the way by Arabs armed to the teeth to prevent a rescue by the Bey of Constantina.

On their arrival at the valley, which was the headquarters of the tribe, the sheik of the entire clan had laid claim to the principal captives, and had carried off the young lady and her uncle; and in his dwelling she had a boarded floor to sleep on, and had been made much more comfortable than in the squalid huts below. Her original master, Yakoub, had, however come to seize her, with the force described by Murad. Then it was that again there was a threat to kill rather than resign them; but on this occasion it was averted by Sheik Abderrahman's son, a boy of about fourteen, who threw himself on his knees before mademoiselle, and prayed his father earnestly for her life.

"They spared her then," said Lanty, "and, mayhap, worse still may come of that. Yakoub, the villain, ended by getting her back till they can have a council of their tribe, and there she is in his filthy hut; but the gossoon, Selim, as they call him, prowls about the place as if he were bewitched. All the children are, for that matter, wherever she goes. She makes cat's-cradles for them, and sings to them, and tells them stories in her own sweet way out of the sacred history—such as may bring her into trouble one of these days. Maitre Hebert heard her one day telling them the story of Moses, and he warned her that if she went on in that fashion it might be the death of us all. 'But,' says she, 'suppose we made Selim, and little Zuleika, and all the rest of them, Christians? Suppose we brought all the tribe to come down and ask baptism, like as St. Nona did in the 'Lives of the Saints?' He told her it was more like that they would only get her darling little head cut off, if no worse, but he could not get her to think that mattered at all at all. She would have a crown and a palm up in

heaven, and V. M. after her name in the calendar on earth, bless her."

Then he went on to tell that Yakoub was furious at the notion of resigning his prize, and (Agamemnon like) declared that if she were taken from him he should demand Victorine from Eyoub. Unfortunately she was recovering her good looks in the mountain air; and worse still the spring of her "blessed little Polichinelle" was broken, though happily no one guessed it, and hitherto it had been enough to show them the box.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRYSEIS AND BRISEIS.

"The child
Restore, I pray, her proffered ransom take,
And in His priest, the Lord of Light revere.
Then through the ranks assenting murmurs rang,
The priest to reverence, and the ransom take."

Homer (Derby).

For one moment, before emerging from the forest, looking through an opening in the trees, down a steep slope, a group of children could be seen on the grass in front of the huts composing the adowara, little brown figures in scanty garments, lying about evidently listening intently to the figure, the gleam of whose blond hair showed her instantly to be Estelle de Bourke.

However, either the deputation had been descried, or Eyoub may have made some signal, for when the cavalcade had wound about through the remaining trees, and arrived among the huts, no one was to be seen. There was only the irregular square of huts built of rough stones and thatched with reeds, with big stones to keep the thatch on in the storm; a few goats were tethered near, and there was a rush of the great savage dogs, but they recognized Eyoub and Lanty, and were presently quieted.

"This is the chief danger," whispered Lanty. "Pray Heaven the rogues do not murder them rather than give them up!"

The Sunakite, beginning to make strange contortions and mutterings in a low voice, seemed to terrify Eyoub greatly. Whether he pointed it out or not, or whether Eyoub was induced by his gestures to show it, was not clear to Arthur's mind; but at the chief abode, an assemblage of two stone hovels and rudely-built walls, the party halted, and made a loud knocking at the door, Hadji Eseb's solemn tones bidding those within to open in the name of Allah.

It was done, disclosing a vista of men with drawn cimeters. The Marabout demanded without ceremony where were the prisoners.

"At yonder house," he was answered by Yakoub himself, pointing to the further end of the village.

"Dog of a liar!" burst forth the Sunakite. "Dost thou think to blind the eyes of the beloved of Allah, who knoweth the secrets of heaven and earth, and hath the sigil of Suleiman Ben Daoud, wherewith to penetrate the secret places of the false?"

The ferocious-looking guardians looked at each other as though under the influence of supernatural terror, and then Hadji Eseb spoke: "Salaam Aleikum, my children; no man need fear who listens to the will of Allah, and honors his messengers."

All made way for the dignified old man and his suit, and they advanced into the court, where two men with drawn swords were keeping guard over the captives, who were on their knees in a corner of the court.

The sabers were sheathed, and there was a shuffling away at the advance of the Marabouts, Sheik Yakoub making some apology about having delayed to admit such guests, but excusing himself on the score of supposing they were emissaries sent by those whose authority he so defied that he had sworn to slaughter his prisoners rather than surrender them.

Hadji Eseb replied with a quotation from the Koran forbidding cruelty to the helpless, and sternly denounced wrath on the transgressors, bidding Yakoub draw off his savage body-guard.

The man was plainly alarmed, more especially as the Sunakite broke out into one of his wild wails of denunciation, waving his hands like a prophet of wrath, and predicting famine, disease, pestilence, to these slack observers of the law of Mohammed.

This completed the alarm. The body-guard fled away pell-mell, Yakoub after them. His women shut themselves into some innermost recesses, and the field was left to the Marabouts and the prisoners, who, not understanding what all this meant, were still kneeling in their corner. Hadji Eseb bade Arthur and the interpreter go to reassure them.

At their advance a miserable embrowned figure, barefooted and half clad in a ragged haik, roped round his waist, threw himself before the fair-haired child, crying out in imperfect Arabic, "Spare her, spare her, great lord! much is to be won by saving her."

"We are come to save her," said Arthur in French. "Maitre Hebert, do you not know me?"

Hebert looked up. "Monsieur Arture! Monsieur Arture! Risen from the dead!" he cried, threw himself into the young man's arms, and burst out into a vehement sob;

but in a second he recovered his manners and fell back, while Estelle looked up.

"Monsieur Arture," she repeated. "Ah! is it you? Then, is my mamma alive and safe?"

"Alas! no," replied Arthur; "but your little brother is safe and well at Algiers, and this good man, the Marabout, is come to deliver you."

"My mamma said you would protect us, and I knew you would come, like Mentor, to save us," said Estelle, clasping her hands with ineffable joy. "Oh, monsieur! I thank you next to the good God and the saints!" and she began fervently kissing Arthur's hand. He turned to salute the abbe, but was shocked to see how much more vacant the poor gentleman's stare had become, and how little he seemed to comprehend.

"Ah!" said Estelle, with her pretty, tender, motherly air, "my poor uncle has never seemed to understand since that dreadful day when they dragged him and Maitre Hebert out into the wood and were going to kill them. And he has fever every night. But, oh, Monsieur Arture, did you say my brother was safe?" she repeated, as if not able to dwell enough upon the glad tidings.

"And I hope you will soon be with him," said Arthur. "But, mademoiselle, let me present you to the Grand Marabout, a sort of Moslem abbe, who has come all this way to obtain your release."

He led Estelle forward, when she made a courtesy fit for her grandmother's *salon*, and in very fluent Cabeleyze dialect gave thanks for the kindness of coming to release her, and begged him to excuse her uncle, who was sick, and, as you say here, "stricken of Allah."

The little French demoiselle's grace and politeness were by no means lost on the Marabout, who replied to her graciously; and at the sight of her reading Monsieur Dessault's letter, which the interpreter presented to her, one of the suit could not help exclaiming, "Ah! if women such as this will be went abroad in our streets, there would be nothing to hope for in Paradise."

Estelle did not seem to have suffered in health; indeed, in Arthur's eyes, she seemed in these six weeks to have grown, and to have more color, while her expression had become less childish, deeper, and higher. Her hair did not look neglected, though her dress—the same dark blue which she had worn on the voyage—had become very ragged and soiled, and her shoes were broken, and tied on with strips of rag.

She gave a little scream of joy when the parcel of clothes sent by the French consul was given to her, only longing to send some to Victorine before she retired to enjoy the com-

fort of clean and respectable clothing; and in the meantime something was attempted for the comfort of her companions, though it would not have been safe to put them into Frankish garments, and none had been brought. Poor Hebert was the very ghost of the stout and important *maitre d'dotel*, and, indeed, the faithful man had borne the brunt of all the privations and sufferings, doing his utmost to shield and protect his little mistress and her helpless uncle.

When Estelle reappeared, dressed once more like a little French lady (at least in the eyes of those who were not particular about fit), she found a little feast prepared for her out of the provisions sent by the consuls; but she could not sit down to it till Arthur, escorted by several of the Marabout's suite, had carried a share both of the food and the garments to Lanty and Victorine.

They, however, were not to be found. The whole adowara seemed to be deserted except by a few frightened women and children, and Victorine and her Irish swain had no doubt been driven off into the woods by Eyoub—no Achilles certainly, but equally unwilling with the great Pelides to resign Briseis as a substitute for Chryseis.

It was too late to attempt anything more that night; indeed, at sundown it became very cold. A fire was lighted in the larger room, in the center, where there was a hole for the exit of the smoke. The Marabouts seemed to be praying or reciting the Koran on one side of it, for there was a continuous chant or hum going on there; but they seemed to have no objection to the Christians sitting together on the other side conversing and exchanging accounts of their adventures. Maitre Hebert could not sufficiently dilate on the spirit, cheerfulness and patience that mademoiselle had displayed through all. He only had to lament her imprudence in trying to talk of the Christian faith to the children, telling them stories of the saints, and doing what, if all the tribe had not been so ignorant, would have brought destruction on them all. "I would not have monseigneur there know of it for worlds," said he, glancing at the Grand Marabout.

"Selim loves to hear such things," said Estelle, composedly. "I have taught him to say the Pater-noster, and the meaning of it, and Zuleika can nearly say them."

"*Misericorde!*" cried Monsieur Hebert. "What may not the child have brought on herself!"

"Selim will be a chief," returned Estelle. "He will make his people do as he pleases, or he would do so; but now there will be no one to tell him about the true God and the blessed Saviour," she added, sadly.

"Mademoiselle!" cried Hebert in indignant anger—

"Mademoiselle would not be ungrateful for our safety from these horrors."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed the child. "I am very happy to return to my poor papa, and my brothers, and my grandmamma. But I am sorry for Selim! Perhaps some good mission fathers would go out to them like those we heard of in Arcadia; and by and by, when I am grown up, I can come back with some sisters to teach the women to wash their children and not scold and fight."

The *maitre d'hotel* sighed, and was relieved when Estelle retired to the deserted women's apartments for the night. He seemed to think her dangerous language might be understood and reported.

The next morning the Marabout sent messengers, who brought back Yakoub and his people, and before many hours a sort of council was convened in the court of Yakoub's house, consisting of all the neighboring heads of families, brown men, whose eyes gleamed fiercely out from under their haiks, and who were armed to the teeth with sabers, daggers, and, if possible, pistols and blunderbusses of all the worn-out patterns in Europe—some no doubt as old as the Thirty Years' War; while those who could not attain to these weapons had the long spears of their ancestors, and were no bad representatives of the Amalekites of old.

After all had solemnly taken their seats there was a fresh arrival of Sheik Abderrahman and his ferocious-looking following. He himself was a man of fine bearing, with a great black beard, and a gold-embroidered sash stuck full of pistols and knives, and with poor Madame de Bourke's best pearl necklace round his neck. His son Selim was with him, a slim youth, with beautiful soft eyes glancing out from under a haik striped with many colors, such as may have been the coat that marked Joseph as the heir.

There were many salaams and formalities, and then the chief Marabout made a speech, explaining the purpose of his coming, diplomatically allowing that the Cabeleyzes were not subject to the Dey of Algiers, but showing that they enjoyed the advantages of the treaty with France, and that therefore they were bound to release the unfortunate shipwrecked captives, whom they had already plundered of all their property. So far Estelle and Arthur, who were anxiously watching, crouching behind the wall of the deserted house court, could follow. Then arose yells and shouts of denial, and words too rapid to be followed. In a lull, Hadji Eseb might be heard proffering ransom, while the cries and shrieks so well known to accompany bargaining broke out.

Ibrahim Aga, who stood by the wall, here told them that

Yakoub and Eyoub seemed not unwilling to consent to the redemption of the male captives, but that they claimed both the females. Hebert clinched his teeth, and bade Ibrahim interfere and declare that he would never be set free without his little lady.

Here, however, the tumult lulled a little, and Abderrahman's voice was heard declaring that he claimed the daughter of the Silkworm as a wife for his son.

Ibrahim then sprung to the Marabout's side, and was heard representing that the young lady was of high and noble blood. To which Abderrahman replied, with the dignity of an old lion, that were she the daughter of the King of the Franks himself, she would only be a fit mate for the son of the King of the Mountains. A fresh roar of jangling and disputing began, during which Estelle whispered, "Poor Selim, I know he would believe—he half does already. It would be like Clotilda."

"And then he would be cruelly murdered, and you too," returned Arthur.

"We should be martyrs," said Estelle, as she had so often said before; and as Hebert shuddered and cried, "Do not speak of such things, mademoiselle, just as there is hope," she answered, "Oh, no! do not think I want to stay in this dreadful place—only if I should have to do so—I long to go to my brother and my poor papa. Then I can send some good fathers to convert them."

"Ha!" cried Arthur; "what now! They are at one another's throats!"

Yakoub and Eyoub with flashing sabers were actually flying at each other, but Marabouts were seizing them and holding them back, and the Sunakite's chant rose above all the uproar.

Ibrahim was able to explain that Yakoub insisted that if the mistress were appropriated by Abderrahman, the maid should be his compensation. Eyoub, who had been the foremost in the rescue from the wreck, was furious at the demand, and they were on the point of fighting when thus withheld; while the Sunakite was denouncing woes on the spoiler and the lover of Christians, which made the blood of the Cabeleyzes run cold. Their flocks would be diseased, storms from the mountains would everwhelm them, their children would die, their name and race be cut off, if infidel girls were permitted to bewitch them, and turn them from the faith of the prophet. He pointed to young Selim, and demanded whether he were not already spellbound by the silken daughter of the Giaour to join in her idolatry.

There were howls of rage, a leaping up, a drawing of swords, a demand that the unbelievers should die at once,

It was a cry the captives knew only too well. Arthur grasped a pistol, and loosened his sword, but young Selim had thrown himself at the marabout's feet, sobbing out entreaties that the maiden's life might be saved, and assurances that he was a stanch believer; while his father, scandalized at such an exhibition on behalf of any such chattel as a female, roughly snatched him from the ground, and insisted on his silence.

The Marabouts had, at their chief's signal, ranged themselves in front of the inner court, and the authority of the Hadji had imposed silence even on the fanatic. He spoke again, making them understand that Frankish vengeance in case of a massacre could reach them even in their mountains when backed by the dey. And to Abderrahman he represented that the only safety for his son, the only peace for his tribe, was in the surrender of these two dangerous causes of altercation.

The King of the Mountains was convinced by the scene that had just taken place of the inexpedience of retaining the prisoners alive. And some pieces of gold thrust into his hand by Ibrahim may have shown him that much might be lost by slaughtering them.

The Babel which next arose was of the amicable bargaining sort. And after another hour of suspense the interpreter came to announce that the mountaineers, out of their great respect, not for the dey, but the Marabout, had agreed to accept nine hundred piasters as the ransom of all the five captives, and that the Marabout recommended an immediate start, lest anything should rouse the ferocity of the tribe again.

Estelle's warm heart would fain have taken leave of the few who had been kind to her; but this was impossible, for the women were in hiding, and she could only leave one or two kerchiefs sent from Algiers, hoping Zuleika might have one of them. Ibrahim insisted on her being veiled as closely as a Mohammedan woman as she passed out. One look between her and Selim might have been fatal to all; though hers may have been in all childish innocence; she did not know how the firery youth was writhing in his father's indignant grasp, forcibly withheld from rushing after one who had been a new life and revelation to him.

Mayhap the passion was as fleeting as it was violent, but the Marabout knew it boded danger to the captives to whom he had pledged his honor. He sent them, mounted on mules, on in front, while he and his company remained in the rear, watching till Lanty and Victorine were driven up like cattle by Eyoub, to whom he paid an earnest of his special share of the ransom. He permitted no pause, not even for a greeting between Estelle and poor Victorine

nor to clothe the two unfortunates, more than by throwing a mantle to poor Victorine, who had nothing but a short petticoat and a scanty, ragged, filthy bournous. She shrouded herself as well as she could when lifted on her mule, scarce perhaps yet aware what had happened to her, only that Lanty was near, muttering benedictions and thanksgivings as he vibrated between her mule and that of the abbe.

It was only at the evening halt that, in a cave on the mountain-side, Estelle and Victorine could cling to each other in a close embrace with sobs of joy; and while Estelle eagerly produced clothes from her little store of gifts, the poor *femme de chambre* wept for joy to feel indeed that she was free, and shed a fresh shower of tears of joy at the sight of a brush and comb.

Lanty was purring over his foster-brother, and cosseting him like a cat over a newly-recovered kitten, resolved not to see how much shaken the poor abbe's intellect had been, and quite sure that the reverend father would be altogether himself when he only had his *soutane* again.

CHAPTER XIV.

WELCOME.

"Well hath the Prophet-chief your bidding done."
Moore—"Lalla Rookh."

BUGIA was thoroughly Moorish, and subject to attacks of fanaticism. Perhaps the Grand Marabout did not wholly trust the Sunakite not to stir up the populace, for he would not take the recovered captives to his palace, avoided the city as much as possible, and took them down to the harbor, where, beside the old Roman quay, he caused his trusty attendant, Reverdi, to hire a boat to take them out to the French tartan—Reverdi himself going with them to insure the fidelity of the boatmen. Estelle would have kissed the good old man's hand in fervent thanks, but, child as she was, he shrank from her touch as an unholy thing; and it was enforced on her and Victorine that they were by no means to remove their heavy mufflings till they were safe on board the tartan, and even out of harbor.

The Frenchman in command of the vessel was evidently of the same mind, and, though enchanted to receive them, sent them at once below. He said his men had been in danger of being mobbed in the streets, and that there were reports abroad that the harem of a great Frank chief, and all his treasure, were being recovered from the Caboleyzes, so that he doubted whether all the influence of the

Grand Marabout might prevent their being pursued by corsairs.

Right glad was he to recognize the pennant of the Calypso outside the harbor, and he instantly ran up a signal flag to intimate success. A boat was immediately put off from the frigate, containing not only Lieutenant Bullock, but an officer in scarlet, who had no sooner come on deck than he shook Arthur eagerly by the hand, exclaiming:

"'Tis you, then! I cannot be mistaken in poor Davie's son, though you were a mere bit bairn when I saw you last!"

"Archie Hope!" exclaimed Arthur, joyfully. "Can you tell me anything of my mother?"

"She was well when I last heard of her, only sore vexed that you should be cut off from her by your own fule deed, my lad! Ye've thought better of it now?"

Major Hope was here interrupted by the lieutenant, who brought an invitation from Captain Beresford to the whole French party to bestow themselves on board the Calypso. After ascertaining that the Marabout had taken up their cause, and that the journey up Mount Couco and back again could not occupy less than twelve or fourteen days, he had sailed for Minorca, where he had obtained sanction to convey any of the captives who might be rescued, to Algiers. He had also seen Major Hope, who, on hearing of the adventures of his young kinsman, asked leave of absence to come in search of him, and became the guest of the officers of the Calypso.

Arthur found himself virtually the head of the party, and, after consultation with Ibrahim Aga and Maitre Hebert, it was agreed that there would be far more safety, as well as better accommodation, in the British ship than in the French tartan, and Arthur went down to communicate the proposal to Estelle, whom the close, little, evil-smelling cabin was already making much paler than all her privations had done.

"An English ship," she said. "Would my papa approve?" and her little prim diplomatic air sat comically on her.

"Oh, yes, said Arthur. "He himself asked the captain to seek for you, mademoiselle. There is peace between our countries, you know."

"That is good," she said, jumping up. "For, oh! this cabin is worse than it is inside Yakoub's hut! Oh, take me on deck before I am ill!"

She was able to be her own little charming French and Irish self when Arthur led her on deck; and her gracious thanks and pretty courtesy made them agree that it would

have been ten thousand pities if such a creature could not have been redeemed from the savage Arabs.

The whole six were speedily on board the Calypso, where Captain Beresford received the little heroine with politeness worthy of her own manners. He had given up his own cabin for her and Victorine, purchased at Port Mahon all he thought she could need, and had even recollected to procure clerical garments for the abbe--a sight which rejoiced Lanty's faithful heart, though the poor abbe was too ill all the time of the voyage to leave his berth. Arthur's arrival was greeted by the Abyssinian with an inarticulate howl of delight, as the poor fellow crawled to his feet, and began kissing them before he could prevent it.

Fareek had been the pet of the sailors, and well taken care of by the boatswain. He was handy, quick, and useful, and Captain Beresford thought he might pick up a living as an attendant in the galley; but he showed that he held himself to belong absolutely to Arthur, and rendered every service to him that he could, picking up what was needful in the care of European clothes by imitation of the captain's servant, and showing a dexterity that made it probable that his cleverness had been the cause of the loss of a tongue that might have betrayed too much. To young Hope he seemed like a sacred legacy from poor Tam, and a perplexing one, such as he could hardly leave in his dumbness to take the chances of life among sailors.

His own plans were likewise to be considered, and Major Hope concerned himself much about them. He was a second cousin—a near relation in Scottish estimation—and no distant neighbor. His family were Tories, though content to submit to the House of Hanover, and had always been on friendly terms with Lady Hope.

"I writ at once, on hearing of you, to let her know you were in safety," said the major. "And what do you intend the noo?"

"Can I win home?" anxiously asked Arthur. "You know I never was attainted!"

"And what would ye do if you were at home?"

"I should see my mother."

"Small doubt of the welcome she would have for you, my poor laddie," said the major; "but what next?" And as Arthur hesitated, "I misdoubt greatly whether Burnside would give you a helping hand if you came fresh from colloguing with French Jacobites, though my father and all the rest of us at the Lynn aye told him that he might thank himself and his dour old dominie for your prank—you were but a schoolboy then—you are a man now; and though your poor mother would be blithe to set eyes on

you, she would be sairly perplexed what gate you had best turn thereafter. Now, see here! There's talk of our being sent to dislodge the Spaniards from Sicily. You are a likely lad, and the colonel would take my word for you if you came back with me to Port Mahon as a volunteer; and once under King George's colors, there would be pressure enough from all of us Hopes upon Burnside to gar him get you a commission, unless you win one for yourself. Then you could gang hame when the time was served, a credit and an honor to all!"

"I had rather win my own way than be beholden to Burnside," said Arthur, his face lighting at the proposal.

"Hout, man! That will be as the chances of war may turn out. As to your kit, we'll see to that! Never fear. Your mother will make it up."

"Thanks, Archie, with all my heart, but I am not so destitute," and he mentioned Yusuf's legacy, which the major held that he was perfectly justified in appropriating; and in answer to his next question, assured him that he would be able to retain Fareek as his servant.

This was enough for Arthur, who knew that the relief to his mother's mind of his safety and acceptance as a subject would outweigh any disappointment at not seeing his face, when he would only be an unforgiven exile, liable to be informed against by any malicious neighbor.

He borrowed materials, and had written a long letter to her before the Calypso put in at Algiers. The little swift tartan had forestalled her; and every one was on the watch, when Estelle, who had been treated like a little princess on board, was brought in the long boat with all her party to the quay. Though it was at daybreak, not only the European inhabitants, but Turks, Arabs, Moors, and Jews thronged the wharf in welcome; and there were jubilant cries as all the five captives could be seen seated in the boat in the light of the rising sun.

Monsieur Dessault, with Ulysse in his hand, stood foremost on the quay, and the two children were instantly in each other's embrace. Their uncle had to be helped out. He was more bewildered than gratified by the welcome. He required to be assured that the multitudes assembled meant him no harm, and would not move without Lanty; and though he bowed low in return to Monsieur Dessault's greeting, it was like an automaton, and with no recognition.

Estelle, between her brother and her friend, and followed by all the rest, was conducted by the French consul to the chapel, arranged in one of the Moorish rooms. There stood beside the altar his two chaplains, and at once mass was commenced, while all threw themselves on their knees

in thankfulness; and at the well-known sound a ray of intelligence and joy began to brighten even poor Phelim's features.

Arthur, in overflowing joy, could not but kneel with the others; and when the service concluded with the *Te Deum's* lofty praise, his tears dropped for joy and gratitude that the captivity was over, the children safe, and himself no longer an outcast and exile.

He had, however, to take leave of the children sooner than he wished, for the Calypso had to sail the next day.

Ulysse wept bitterly, clung to him, and persisted that he *was* their secretary, and must go with them. Estelle, too, had tears in her eyes; but she said, half in earnest, "You know, Mentor vanished when Telemaque came home! Some day, monsieur, you will come to see us at Paris, and we shall know how to show our gratitude!"

Both Lanty and Maitre Hebert promised to write to Monsieur Arture; and in due time he received not only their letters, but fervid acknowledgments from the Comte de Bourke, who knew that to him was owing the life and liberty of the children.

From Lanty Arthur further heard that the poor abbe had languished and died soon after reaching home. His faithful foster-brother was deeply distressed, though the family had rewarded the fidelity of the servants by promoting Hebert to be intendant of the Provencal estates, while Lanty was wedded to Victorine, with a *dot* that enabled them to start a flourishing *perruquier's* shop, and make a home for his mother when little Jacques outgrew her care.

Estelle was in due time married to a French nobleman, and in after years "General Sir Arthur Hope" took his son and daughter to pay her a long visit in her Provencal chateau, and to converse on the strange adventures that seemed like a dream. He found her a noble lady, well fulfilling the promise of her heroic girlhood, and still lamenting the impossibility of sending any mission to open the eyes of the half-converted Selim.

[THE END.[

HENRIETTA'S WISH;

OR,

DOMINEERING.

BY CHARLOTTE M. YONGE.

CHAPTER I.

On the afternoon of a warm day in the end of July, an open carriage was waiting in front of the painted, toy-looking building, which served as the railway station of Teignmouth. The fine bay horses stood patiently enduring the attacks of hosts of winged foes, too well behaved to express their annoyance otherwise than by twitchings of their sleek, shining skins, but duly grateful to the coachman, who aroused himself now and then to whisk off some more pertinacious tormentor with the end of his whip.

Less patient was the sole occupant of the carriage, a maiden of about sixteen years of age, whose shady, dark-gray eyes, parted lips and flushed complexion, were all full of the utmost eagerness, as every two or three minutes she looked up from the book which she held in her hand, to examine the clock over the station door, compare it with her watch, and study the countenances of the by-standers to see whether they expressed any anxiety respecting the non-arrival of the train. All, however, seemed quite at their ease; and after a time the arrival of the railway omnibus and two or three other carriages, convinced her that the rest of the world only now began to consider it to be due. At last the ringing of a bell quickened everybody into a sudden state of activity, and assured her that the much-desired moment was come. The cloud of smoke was seen, the panting of the engine was heard, the train displayed its length before the station, men ran along tapping the doors of the carriages, and shouting a word which bore some distant resemblance

to "Teignmouth," and at the same moment various travelers emerged from the different vehicles.

Her eye eagerly sought out one of these arrivals, who, on his side, after a hasty greeting to the servant, who met him on the platform, hurried to the carriage, and sprung into it. The two faces, exactly alike in form, complexion, and features, were for one moment pressed together, then withdrawn, in the consciousness of the publicity of the scene, but the hands remained locked together, and earnest was the tone of the "Well, Fred!" "Well Henrietta!" which formed the greeting of the twin brother and sister.

"And was not mamma well enough to come?" asked Frederick, as the carriage turned away from the station.

"She was afraid of the heat. She had some business letters to write yesterday which teased her, and she has not recovered from them yet; but she has been very well, on the whole, this summer. But what of your school affairs, Fred? How did the examination go off?"

"I am fourth, and Alex Langford fifth. Every one says the prize will lie between us next year."

"Surely," said Henrietta, "you must be able to beat him, then, if you are before him now."

"Don't make too sure, Henrietta," said Frederick, shaking his head. "Langford is a hard-working fellow, very exact and accurate; I should not have been before him now if it had not been for my verses."

"I know Beatrice is very proud of Alexander," said Henrietta; "she would make a great deal of his success."

"Why of his more than of that of any other cousin?" said Frederick, with some dissatisfaction.

"Oh, you know he is the only one of the Knight Sutton cousins whom she patronizes; all the others she calls cubs and bears and Osbaldistones. And indeed, Uncle Geoffrey says he thinks it was in great part owing to her that Alex is different from the rest. At least he began to think him worth cultivating from the time he found him and Busy Bee perched up together in an apple-tree, she telling him the story of Alexander the Great. And how she always talks about Alex when she is here."

"Is she at Knight Sutton?"

"Yes, Aunt Geoffrey would not come here because she did not wish to be far from London, because old Lady Susan has not been well. And only think, Fred, Queen Bee says there is a very nice house to be let close to the village, and they went to look at it with grandpapa, and he kept on saying how well it would do for us."

"Oh, if we could but get mamma there!" said Fred. "What does she say?"

"She knows the house, and says it is a very pleasant one," s id Henrietta; "but that is not an inch—no, not the hundredth part of an inch—toward going there!"

"It would surely be a good thing for her if she could but be brought to believe so," said Frederick. "All her attachments are there—her own home; my father's home."

"There is nothing but the sea to be attached to, here," said Henrietta. "Nobody can take root without some local interest, and as to acquaintance, the people are always changing."

"And there is nothing to do," added Fred; "nothing possible but boating and riding, which are not worth the misery which they cause her, as Uncle Geoffrey says. It is very, very——"

"Aggravating," said Henrietta, supplying one of the numerous stock of family slang words.

"Yes, aggravating," said he, with a smile; "to be placed under the necessity of being absurd, or of annoying her!"

"Annoying! Oh, Fred, you do not know a quarter of what she goes through when she thinks you are in any danger. It could not be worse if you were on the field of battle! And it is very strange, for she is not at all a timid person for herself. In the boat, that time when the wind rose, I am sure Aunt Geoffrey was more afraid than she was, and I have seen it again and again that she is not easily frightened."

"No; and I do not think she is afraid for you."

"Not as she is for you, Fred; but then boys are so much more precious than girls, and besides they love to endanger themselves so much, that I think that is reasonable."

"Uncle Geoffrey thinks there is something nervous and morbid in it," said Fred; "he thinks that it is the remains of the horror of the sudden shock——"

"What? Our father's accident?" asked Henrietta. "I never knew rightly about that. I only knew it was when we were but a week old."

"No one saw it happen," said Fred; "he went out riding, his horse came home without him, and he was lying by the side of the road."

"Did they bring him home?" asked Henrietta, in the same low, thrilling tone in which her brother spoke.

"Yes, but he never recovered his senses; he just said 'Mary,' once or twice, and only lived to the middle of the night!"

"Terrible!" said Henrietta, with a shudder. "Oh, how did mamma ever recover it? at least, I do not think she

has recovered it now—but I meant live, or be even as well as she is."

"She was fearfully ill for long after," said Fred, "and Uncle Geoffrey thinks that these anxieties for me are an effect of the shock. He says they are not at all like her usual character. I am sure it is not to be wondered at."

"Oh, no, no!" said Henrietta. "What a mystery it has always seemed to us about papa! She sometimes mentioning him in talking about her childish days and Knight Sutton, but if we tried to ask any more, grandmamma stopping us directly, till we learned to believe we ought never to utter his name. I do believe, though, that mamma herself would have found it a comfort to talk to us about him, if poor dear grandmamma had not always cut her short, for fear it should be too much for her."

"But had you not always an impression of something dreadful about his death?"

"Oh, yes, yes; I do not know how we acquired it, but that I am sure we had, and it made us shrink from asking any questions, or even from talking to each other about it. All I knew I heard from Beatrice. Did Uncle Geoffrey tell you this?"

"Yes, he told me when he was here last Easter, and I was asking him to speak to mamma about my fishing, and saying how horrid it was to be kept back from everything. First he laughed, and said it was the penalty of being an only son, and then he entered upon this history, to show me how it is."

"But it is very odd that she should have let you learn to ride, which one would have thought she would have dreaded most of all."

"That was because she thought it right, he says. Poor mamma, she said to him, 'Geoffrey, if you think it right that Fred should begin to ride, never mind my folly.' He says he thinks it cost her as much resolution to say that as it might to be martyred. And the same about going to school."

"Yes, yes; exactly," said Henrietta, "if she thinks it right, bear it she will, cost her what it may! O, there is nobody like mamma. Busy Bee says so, and she knows, living in London and seeing so many people as she does."

"I never saw any one so like a queen," said Fred. "No, nor any one so beautiful, though she is so pale and thin. People say you are like her in her young days, Henrietta; and, to be sure, you have a decent face of your own, but you will never be as beautiful as mamma, not if you live to be a hundred."

"You are afraid to compliment my face because it is so like your own, Master Fred," retorted his sister; "but one

comfort is, that I shall grow more like her by living to a hundred, whereas you will lose all the little likeness you have, and grow a grim old Blackbeard. But I was going to say, Fred, that, though I think there is a great deal of truth in what Uncle Geoffrey said, yet I do believe that poor grandmamma made it worse. You know she had always been in India, and knew less about boys than mamma, who had been brought up with papa and my uncles, so she might really believe that everything was dangerous; and I have often seen her quite as much alarmed, or more, perhaps, about you—her consolation just showing that she was in a dreadful fright, and so making mamma twice as bad."

"Well," said Fred, sighing, "that is all over now, and she thought she was doing it all for the best."

"And," proceeded Henrietta, "I think, and Queen Bee thinks, that this perpetual staying on at Rocksand was more owing to her than to mamma. She imagined that mamma could not bear the sight of Knight Sutton, and that it was a great kindness to keep her from thinking of moving——"

"Ay, and that nobody can doctor her but Mr. Clarke," added Fred.

"Till now, I really believe," said Henrietta, "that the possibility of moving has entirely passed out of her mind, and she no more believes that she can do it than that the house can."

"Yes," said Fred, "I do not think a journey occurs to her among events possible, and yet without being very fond of this place."

"Fond! O no! it never was meant to be a home, and has nothing homelike about it. All her affections are really at Knight Sutton, and if she once went there, she would stay and be so much happier among her own friends, instead of being isolated here with me. In grandmamma's time it was not so bad for her, but now she has no companion at all but me. Rocksand has all the loneliness of the country without its advantages."

"There is not much complaint as to happiness, after all," said Fred.

"No, O no! But then it is she who makes it delightful, and it cannot be well for her to have no one to depend upon but me. Besides, how useless one is here! No opportunity of doing anything for the poor people, no clergyman who will put one into the way of being useful. O how nice it would be at Knight Sutton!"

"And perhaps she would be cured of her fears," added Fred; "she would find no one to share them, and be con-

vinced by seeing that the cousins there come to no harm. I wish Uncle Geoffrey would recommend it."

"Well, we will see what we can do," said Henrietta. "I do think we may persuade her, and I think we ought; it would be for her happiness and for yours, and on all accounts I am convinced that it ought to be done."

And as Henrietta came to this serious conclusion, they entered the steep, straggling street of the little town of Rocksand, and presently were within the gates of the sweep which led to the door of the verandaed Gothic cottage, which looked very tempting for a summer's lodging, but was little fitted for a permanent abode.

In spite of all the longing wishes expressed during the drive, no ancestral home, beloved by inheritance, could have been entered with more affectionate rapture than that with which Frederick Langford sprung from the carriage, and flew to the arms of his mother, receiving and returning such a caress as could only be known by a boy conscious that he had done nothing to forfeit home-love and confidence.

Turning back the fair hair that hung over his forehead, Mrs. Langford looked into his eyes, saying, half-interrogatively, half-affirmatively:

"All right, Fred? Nothing that we need be afraid to tell Uncle Geoffrey? Well, Henrietta, he is grown, but he has not passed you yet. And now, Freddy, tell us about your examination," added she, as, fondly leaning on his arm, she proceeded into the drawing-room, and they sat down together on the sofa, talking eagerly and joyously.

Mrs. Frederick Henry Langford (to give her her proper style) was in truth one whose peculiar loveliness of countenance well deserved the admiration expressed by her son. It was indeed pale and thin, but the features were beautifully formed, and had that expression of sweet, placid resignation which would have made a far plainer face beautiful. The eyes were deep dark-blue, and though sorrow and suffering had dimmed their brightness, their softness was increased; the smile was one of peace, of love, of serenity—of one who, though sorrow-stricken, as it were, before her time, had lived on in meek patience and submission, almost a child in her ways, as devoted to her mother, as little with a will and way of her own, as free from the cares of this work-a-day world. The long, luxuriant dark-brown hair, which once, as now with Henrietta, had clustered in thick glossy ringlets over her comb and round her face, was in thick braids beneath the delicate lace cap which suited with her plain black silk dress. Her figure was slender, so tall that neither her well-grown son

nor daughter had yet reached her height, and, as Frederick said, with something queenlike in its unconscious grace and dignity.

As a girl, she had been the merriest of the merry, and even now she had great playfulness of manner, and threw herself into the occupation of the moment with a life and animation that gave an uncommon charm to her manners, so that how completely sorrow had depressed and broken her spirit would scarcely have been guessed by one who had not known her in earlier days.

Frederick's account of his journey and of his school news was heard and commented on, a work of time extending far into the dinner; the next matter in the regular course of conversation on the day of arrival was to talk over Uncle and Aunt Geoffrey's proceedings, and the Knight Sutton affairs.

"So Uncle Geoffrey has been in the North?" said Fred.

"Yes, on a special retainer," said Mrs. Langford, "and very much he seems to have enjoyed his chance of seeing York Cathedral."

"He wrote to me in court," said Fred, "to tell me what books I had better get up for this examination, and on a bit of paper scribbled all over one side with notes of the evidence. He said the cathedral was beautiful beyond all he ever imagined."

"Had he never seen it before?" said Henrietta. "Lawyers seem made to travel in their vacations."

"Uncle Geoffrey could not be spared," said her mamma; "I do not know what Grandmamma Langford would do if he cheated her of any more of his holiday than he bestows upon us. He is far too valuable to be allowed to take his own pleasure."

"Besides, his own pleasure is at Knight Sutton," said Henrietta.

"He goes home just as he used from school," said Mrs. Langford. "Indeed, except a few gray hairs and 'crows-feet,' he is not in the least altered from those days; his work and play come just in the same way."

"And, as his daughter says, he is just as much the home pet," added Henrietta, "only rivaled by Busy Bee herself."

"No," said Fred, "according to Aunt Geoffrey, they are two suns in one sphere; Queen Bee is grandpapa's pet, Uncle Geoffrey grandmamma's. It must be great fun to see them."

"Happy people!" said Mrs. Langford.

"Henrietta says," proceeded Fred, "that there is a house to be let at Knight Sutton."

"The Pleasance; yes, I know it well," said his mother;

"it is not actually in the parish, but close to the borders, and a very pretty place."

"With a pretty little stream in the garden, Fred," said Henrietta, "and looking into that beautiful Sussex coomb, that there is a drawing of in mamma's room."

"What size is it?" added Fred.

"The comparative degree," said Mrs. Langford, "but my acquaintance with it does not extend beyond the recollection of a pretty-looking drawing-room with French windows, and a lawn where I used to be allowed to run about when I went with Grandmamma Langford to call on the old Miss Drakes. I wonder your Uncle Roger does not take it, for those boys can scarcely, I should think, be wedged into Sutton Leigh when they are all at home."

"I wish some one else would take it," said Fred.

"Some one," added Henrietta, "who would like it of all things, and be quite at home there."

"A person," proceeded the boy, "who likes Knight Sutton and its inhabitants better than anything else."

"Only think," joined in the young lady, "how delightful it would be. I can just fancy you, mamma, sitting out on this lawn you talk of on a summer's day, and nursing your pinks and carnations, and listening to the nightingales, and Grandpapa and Grandmama Langford, and Uncle and Aunt Roger, and the cousins coming walking in at any time without ringing at the door? And how nice to have Queen Bee and Uncle and Aunt Geoffrey all the vacation!"

"Without feeling as if we were robbing Knight Sutton," said Mrs. Langford. "Why, we should have you a regular little country maid, Henrietta, riding shaggy ponies, and scrambling over hedges, as your mamma did before you."

"And being as happy as a queen," said Henrietta, "and the poor people, you know them all, don't you, mamma?"

"I know their names, but my generation must have nearly passed away. But I should like you to see old Daniels the carpenter, whom the boys used to work with and who was so fond of them. And the old schoolmistress in her spectacles. How she must be scandalized by the introduction of a noun and verb!"

"Who has been so cruel?" asked Fred. "Busy Bee, I suppose."

"Yes," said Henrietta, "she teaches away with all her might; but she says she is afraid they will forget it all while she is in London, for there is no one to keep it up. Now, I could do that nicely. How I should like to be Queen Bee's deputy."

"But," said Fred, "how does Beatrice manage to make

grandmamma endure such novelties? I should think she would disdain them more than the old mistress herself."

"Queen Bee's is not merely a nominal sovereignty," said Mrs. Langford.

"Besides," said Henrietta, "the new clergyman approves of all that sort of thing; he likes her to teach, and puts her in the way of it."

CHAPTER II.

FROM this time forward everything tended toward Knight Sutton: castles in the air, persuasions, casual words which showed the turn of thought of the brother and sister, met their mother every hour. Nor was she, as Henrietta truly said, entirely averse to the change; she loved to talk of what she still regarded as her home, but the shrinking dread of the pang it must give to return to the scene of her happiest days, to the burial-place of her husband, to the abode of his parents, had been augmented by the tender, overanxious care of her mother, Mrs. Vivian, who had strenuously endeavored to prevent her from ever taking such a proposal into consideration, and fairly led her at length to believe it was out of the question.

A removal would in fact have been impossible during the latter years of Mrs. Vivian's life; but she had now been dead about eighteen months, her daughter had recovered from the first grief of her loss, and there was a general impression throughout the family that now was the time for her to come amongst them again. For herself, the possibility was but beginning to dawn upon her; just at first she joined in building castles and imagining scenes at Knight Sutton, without thinking of their being realized, or that it only depended upon her to find herself at home there; and when Frederick and Henrietta, encouraged by this manner of talking, pressed it upon her, she would reply with some vague intention of a return some time or other, but still thinking of it as something far away, and rather to be dreaded than desired.

It was chiefly by dint of repetition that it fully entered her mind that it was their real and earnest wish that she should engage to take a lease of the Pleasance, and remove almost immediately from her present abode; and from this time it might be perceived that she always shrunk from entering on the subject in a manner which gave them little reason to hope.

"Yet, I think," said Henrietta to her brother one afternoon as they were walking together on the sands; "I think if she once thought it was right, if Uncle Geoffrey would tell

her so, or if grandpapa would really tell her that he wished it, I am quite sure that she would resolve upon it."

"But why did he not do so long ago?" said Fred.

"Oh! because of grandmamma, I suppose," said Henrietta; "but he really does wish it, and I should not at all wonder if the Busy Bee could put it into his head to do it."

"Or if Uncle Geoffrey would advise her," said Fred; "but it never answers to try to make him propose anything to her. He never will do it; he always says he is not the pope, or something to that effect."

"If I was not fully convinced that it was right, and the best for all parties, I would not say so much about it," said Henrietta, in a tone rather as if she was preparing for some great sacrifice, instead of domineering over her mother.

To domineering, her temptation was certainly great. With all her good sense and ability, Mrs. Langford had seldom been called upon to decide for herself, but had always relied upon her mother for counsel; and during her long and gradual decline had learned to depend upon her brother-in-law, Mr. Geoffrey Langford, for direction in great affairs, and in lesser ones upon her children. Girls are generally older of their age than boys, and Henrieta, a clever girl and her mother's constant companion, occupied a position in the family which amounted to something more than prime minister. Some one person must always be leader, and thus she had gradually attained, or had greatness thrust upon her; for justice requires it to be stated, that she more frequently tried to know her mamma's mind for her, than to carry her own point, though perhaps to do so always was more than could be expected of human nature at sixteen. The habit of being called on to settle whether they should use the britzska or the pony carriage, whether satin or silk was best, or this or that book should be ordered, was, however, sufficient to make her very unwilling to be thwarted in other matters of more importance, especially in one on which were fixed the most ardent hopes of her brother, and the wishes of all the family.

Their present abode was, as she often said to herself, not the one best calculated for the holiday sports of a boy of sixteen, yet Frederick, having been used to nothing else, was very happy, and had tastes formed on their way of life. The twins, as little children, had always had the same occupations, Henrietta learning Latin, marbles, and trap ball, and Frederick playing with dolls and working cross-stitch; and even now the custom was so far continued, that he gave lessons in Homer and Euclid in return

for those which he received in Italian and music. For present amusement there was no reason to complain; the neighborhood supplied many beautiful walks, while longer expeditions were made with Mrs. Langford in the pony carriage, and sketching, botanizing, and scrambling were the order of the day. Boating, too, was a great delight, and had it not been for an occasional fretting recollection that he could not go out sailing without his mamma, and that most of his school-fellows were spending their holidays in a very different manner, he would have been perfectly happy. Fortunately he had not sufficient acquaintance with the boys in the neighborhood for the contrast to be often brought before him.

Henrietta did not do much to reconcile him to the anxious care with which he was guarded. She was proud of his talents, of his accomplishments, of his handsome features, and she would willingly have been proud of his excellence in manly sports; but in lieu of this she was proud of the spirit which made him long for them, and encouraged it by her full and entire sympathy. The belief that the present restraints must be diminished at Knight Sutton was a moving spring with her, as much as her own wish for the scenes round which imagination had thrown such a brilliant halo. Of society they had hitherto seen little or nothing: Mrs. Langford's health and spirits had never been equal to visiting, nor was there much to tempt her in the changing inhabitants of a watering-place. Now and then, perhaps, an old acquaintance or distant connection of some part of the family came for a month or six weeks, and a few calls were exchanged, and it was one of these visits that led to the following conversation.

"By the bye, mamma," said Fred, "I meant to ask you what that foolish woman meant about the St. Legers, and their not having thoroughly approved of Aunt Geoffrey's marriage."

"About the most ill-placed thing she could have said, Freddy," replied Mrs. Langford, "considering that I was always accused of having made the match."

"Made the match! O, tell us, mamma; tell us all about it. Did you really?"

"Not consciously, Fred, and Frank St. Leger deserves quite as much of the credit as I do."

"Who was he? a brother of Aunt Geoffrey's?"

"O, yes, Fred," said Henrietta, "to be sure you know that. You have heard how mamma came home from India with General St. Leger and his little boy and girl. By the bye, mamma, what became of their mother?"

"Lady Beatrice? She died in India just before we came

home. Well, I used to stay with them after we came back to England, and of course talked to my friend——"

"Call her Beatrice, mamma, and make a story of it."

"I talked to her about my Knight Sutton home, and cousins, and on the other hand, Frank was always telling her about his school friend, Geoffrey Langford. At last Frank brought him home with him from Oxford one Easter vacation. It was when the general was in command at ——, and Beatrice was in the midst of all sorts of gayeties, the mistress of the house, entertaining everybody, and all exactly what a novel would call brilliant."

"Were you there, mamma?"

"Yes, Beatrice had made a point of our coming to stay with her, and very droll it was to see how she and Geoffrey were surprised at each other; she to find her brother's guide, philosopher, and friend, the Langford who had gained every prize, a boyish-looking, boyish-mannered youth, very shy at first, and afterward, excellent at giggling and making giggle; and he to find one with the exterior of a fine, gay lady so really simple in tastes and habits."

"Was Aunt Geoffrey ever pretty?" asked Fred.

"She is just what she was then, a little brown thing, with no actual beauty but in her animation and in her expression. I never saw a really handsome person who seemed to me nearly as charming. Then she had, and indeed has now, so much air and grace, so much of what, for want of a better word, I must call fashion in her appearance, that she was always very striking."

"Yes," said Henrietta, "I can quite see that; it is not gracefulness, and it is not beauty, nor is it what she ever thinks of, but there is something distinguished about her. I should look twice at her if I met her in the street, and expect to see her get into a carriage with a coronet. And then and there they fell in love, did they?"

"In long morning expeditions with the ostensible purpose of sketching, but in which I had all the drawing to myself, while the others talked either wondrous wisely or wondrous drolly. However, you must not suppose that anything of the novel kind was said then; Geoffry was only twenty, and Beatrice seemed as much out of his reach as the king's daughter of Hongarie."

"O yes, of course," said Henrietta, "but that only makes it more delightful! Only to think of Uncle and Aunt Geoffrey having a novel in their history."

"That there are better novels in real life than in stories, is a truth or a truism often repeated, Henrietta," said her mother, with a soft sigh, which she repressed in an instant, and proceeded: "Poor Frank's illness and death at

Oxford brought them together the next year in a very different manner. Geoffrey was one of his chief nurses to the last, and was a great comfort to them all; you may suppose how grateful they were to him. Next time I saw him, he seemed quite to have buried his youthful spirits in his studies; he was reading morn, noon, and night, and looking ill and overworked."

"O, Uncle Geoffrey! dear, good Uncle Geoffrey!" cried Henrietta, in an ecstasy; "you were as delightful as a knight of old, only as you could not fight tournaments for her, you were obliged to read for her; and pining away all the time and saying nothing about it."

"Nothing beyond a demure inquiry of me when we were alone together, after the health of the general. Well, you know how well his reading succeeded, he took a double first class, and very proud of him we were."

"And still he saw nothing of her," said Fred.

"Not till some time after he had been settled in his chambers at the Temple. Now, you must know that General St. Leger, though in most matters a wise man, was not by any means so in money matters; and by some unlucky speculation, which was to have doubled his daughter's fortune, managed to lose the whole of it, leaving little but his pay."

"Capital!" cried Frederick, "that brings her down to him!"

"So it did," said his mother, smiling; "but the spectators did not rejoice quite so heartily as you do. The general's health was failing, and it was hard to think what would become of Beatrice; for Lord St. Leger's family, though very kind, were not more congenial then than they are now. As soon as all this was pretty well known, Geoffrey spoke, and the general, who was very fond of him, gave full consent. They meant to wait till it was prudent, of course, and were well contented; but just after it was all settled, the general had a sudden seizure and died. Geoffrey was with him, and he treated him like a son, saying it was his great comfort to know that her happiness was in his hands. Poor Beatrice, she went first to the St. Legers', stayed with them two or three months, then I would have her to be my bridemaid, though"—and Mrs. Langford tried to smile, while again she strangled a sobbing sigh—"she warned me that her mourning was a bad omen. Well, she stayed with my mother while we went abroad, and on our return went with us to be introduced at Knight Sutton. Everybody was charmed. Mrs. Langford and Aunt Roger had expected a fine lady, or a blue one, but they soon learned to believe all her gayety and all her cleverness a mere calumny, and grand-

papa was delighted with her the first moment. How well I remember Geoffrey's coming home and thanking us for having managed so well as to make her like one of the family, while the truth was that she had fitted herself in, and found her place from the first moment. Now came a time of grave private conferences. A long engagement, which might have been very well if the general had lived, was a dreary prospect now that Beatrice was without a home; but then your uncle was but just called to the bar, and had next to nothing of his own, present or to come. However, he had begun his literary works, and found them answer so well, that he believed he could maintain himself till briefs came in, and he had the sort of talent which gives confidence. He thought, too, that even in the event of his death, she would be better off as one of us, than as a dependent on the St. Legers; and at last, by talking to us, he nearly persuaded himself to believe it would be a very prudent thing to marry. It was a harder matter to persuade his father, but persuade him he did, and the wedding was at Knight Sutton that very summer."

"That's right," cried Fred, "excellent and glorious! A farthing for all the St. Legers put together."

"Nevertheless, Fred, in spite of your disdain, we were all of opinion that it was a matter of rejoicing that Lord St. Leger and Lady Amelia were present, so that no one had any reason to say that they disapproved. Moreover, lest you should learn imprudence from my story, I would also suggest that if your uncle and aunt had not been a couple *comme il-y-en a peu*, it would neither have been excellent nor glorious."

"Why, they are very well off," said Fred; "he is quite at the head of his profession. The first thing a fellow asks when he hears my name is, if I belong to Langford the barrister."

"Yes, but he never would have been eminent, scarcely have had daily bread, if he had not worked fearfully hard, so hard that without the bouyant schoolboy spirit, which can turn from the hardest toil like a child to its play, his health could never have stood it."

"But then it has been success and triumph," said Fred; "one could work like a galley-slave with encouragement, and never feel it drudgery."

"It was not all success at first," said his mother; "there was hard work, and disappointment, and heavy sorrow too; but they knew how to bear it, and to win through with it."

"And were they very poor?" asked Henrietta.

"Yes; but it was beautiful to see how she accommodated herself to it. The house that once looked dingy and deso-

late, was very soon pretty and cheerful, and the *wirthschaft* so well ordered and economical, that Aunt Roger was struck dumb with admiration. I shall not forget Lady Susan's visit the last morning we spent with her in London, how amazed she was to find 'poor Beatrice' looking so bright and like herself, and how little she guessed at her morning's work, the study of shirt making, and the copying out a review of her husband's, full of Greek quotations."

"Well, the poverty is all over now," said Henrietta; "but still they live in a very quiet way, considering Aunt Geoffrey's connections and the fortune he has made."

"Who put the notion into your head, my wise daughter?" said Mrs. Langford.

Henrietta blushed, laughed, and mentioned Lady Matilda St. Leger, a cousin of her aunt Geoffrey's of whom she had seen something in the course of the last year.

"The truth is," said Mrs. Langford, "that your aunt had display and luxury enough in her youth to value it as it deserves, and he could not desire it except for her sake. They had rather give with a free hand, beyond what any one knows or suspects."

"Ah! I know among other things that he sends Alexander to school," said Fred.

"Yes; and the improvements at Knight Sutton," said Henrietta, "the school, and all that grandpapa wished but could never afford. Well, mamma, if you made the match, you deserve to be congratulated on your work."

"There is nobody like Uncle Geoffrey, I have said, and shall always maintain," said Fred.

His mother sighed, saying: "I don't know what we should have done without him!" and became silent. Henrietta saw an expression on her countenance which made her unwilling to disturb her, and nothing more was said till it was discovered that it was bedtime.

CHAPTER III.

"WHERE is madame?" asked Frederick of his sister, as she entered the breakfast-room alone the next morning with the key of the tea chest in her hand.

"A headache," answered Henrietta, "and a palpitation!"

"A bad one?"

"Yes, very; and I am afraid it is our fault, Freddy; I am convinced it will not do, and we must give it up."

"How do you mean? The going to Knight Sutton? What has that to do with it? Is it the reviving old recollections that is too much for her?"

"Just listen what an effect last evening's conversation had upon her. Last night, after I had been asleep a long time, I woke up, and there I saw her kneeling before the table with her hands over her face. Just then it struck one, and soon after she got into bed. I did not let her know I was awake, for speaking would only have made it worse, but I am sure she did not sleep all night, and this morning has one of her most uncomfortable fits of palpitation. She had just fallen asleep, when I looked in after dressing, but I do not think she will be fit to come down to-day."

"And do you think it was talking of Uncle and Aunt Geoffrey that brought it on?" said Fred, with much concern; "yet it did not seem to have much to do with my father."

"Oh, but it must," said Henrietta. "He must have been there all the time mixed up in everything. Queen Bee has told me how they were always together when they were children."

"Ah! perhaps: and I noticed how she spoke about her wedding," said Fred. "Yes, and to compare how differently it has turned out with Aunt Geoffrey and with her, after they had been young and happy together. Yes, no doubt it was he who persuaded the people at Knight Sutton into letting them marry!"

"And their sorrow that she spoke of must have been his death," said Henrietta. "No doubt the going over those old times renewed all those thoughts."

"And you think going to Knight Sutton might have the same effect. Well, I suppose we must give it up," said Fred, with a sigh. "After all, we can be very happy here!"

"Oh, yes! that we can. It is more on your account than mine that I wished it," said the sister.

"And I should not have thought so much of it, if I had not thought it would be pleasanter for you when I am away," said Fred.

"And so," said Henrietta, laughing yet sighing, "we agree to persuade each other that we don't care about it."

Fred performed a grimace, and remarked that if Henrietta continued to make her tea so scalding, there would soon be a verdict against her of fratricide; but the observation, being intended to conceal certain feelings of disappointment and heroism, only led to silence.

After sleeping for some hours, Mrs. Langford awoke refreshed, and got up, but did not leave her room. Frederick and Henrietta went to take a walk by her desire, as she declared that she preferred being alone, and on their return they found her lying on the sofa.

"Mamma has been in mischief," said Fred. "She did not think herself knocked up enough already, so she has been doing it more thoroughly.

"O, mamma!" was Henrietta's reproachful exclamation, as she looked at her pale face and red, swollen eyelids.

"Never mind, my dears," said she, trying to smile, "I shall be better now this is done, and I have it off my mind." They looked at her in anxious interrogation, and she smiled outright with lip and eye. "You will seal that letter with a good will, Henrietta," she said. "It is to ask Uncle Geoffrey to make inquiries about the Pleasance."

"Mamma!" and they stood transfixed at a decision beyond their hopes; then Henrietta exclaimed:

"No, no, mamma; it will be too much for you; you must not think of it."

"Yes," said Fred; "indeed, we agreed this morning that it would be better not. Put it out of your head, mamma, and go on here in peace and comfort. I am sure it suits you best."

"Thank you, thank you, my dear ones," said she, drawing them toward her, and fondly kissing them; "but it is all settled, and I am sure it is better for you. It is but a dull life for you here."

"Oh, no, no, no, dearest mamma; nothing can be dull with you!" cried Henrietta, wishing most sincerely to undo her own work. "We are, indeed we are, as happy as the day is long. Do not fancy we are discontented; do not think we want a change."

Mrs. Langford replied by an arch, though subdued, smile.

"But we would not have you to do it on our account," said Fred. "Pray put it out of your head, for we do very well here, and it was only a passing fancy."

"You will not talk me out of it, my dears," said Mrs. Langford. "I know it is right, and it shall be done. It is only the making up my mind that was the struggle, and I shall look forward to it as much as either of you, when I know it is to be done. Now walk off, my dears, and do not let that letter be too late for the post."

"I do not half like it," said Fred, pausing at the door.

"I have not many tears on that score," said she, smiling. "No, do not be uneasy about me, my dear Fred, it is my proper place, and I must be happy there. I shall like to be near the Hall, and to see all the dear old places again."

"Oh, mamma, you cannot talk about them without your

voice quivering," said Henrietta. "You do not know how I wish you would give it up!"

"Give it up! I would not for millions," said Mrs. Langford. "Now go, my dears, and perhaps I shall go to sleep again."

The spirits of the brother and sister did not just at first rise enough for rejoicing over the decision. Henrietta would willingly have kept back the letter, but this she could not do, and sealing it as if she were doing wrong, she sat down to dinner, feeling subdued and remorseful, something like a tyrant between the condemnation and execution of his victim. But by the time the first course was over, and she and Frederick had begun to recollect their long-cherished wishes, they made up their minds to be happy, and fell into their usual strain of admiration of the unknown haven of their hopes and of expectations that it would in the end benefit their mother.

The next morning she was quite in her usual spirits, and affairs proceeded in the usual manner; Frederick's holidays came to an end, and he returned to school with many a fond lamentation from the mother and sister, but with cheerful auguries from both that the next meeting might be at Knight Sutton.

"Here, Henrietta," said her mother, as they sat at breakfast together a day or two after Frederick's departure, turning over to her the letter of which she had first broken the seal, while she proceeded to open some others. It was Uncle Geoffrey's writing, and Henrietta read eagerly:

"My dear Mary,—I would not write till I could give you some positive information about the Pleasance, and that could not be done without a conference with Hardy, who was not at home. I am heartily glad that you think of coming among us again, but still I should like to feel certain that it is you that feel equal to it, and not the young ones who are set upon the plan. I suppose you will indignantly refute the charge, but you know I have never trusted you in that matter. However, we are too much the gainers to investigate motives closely; and I cannot but believe that the effort once over, you would find it a great comfort to be among your own people, and in your own country. I fully agree with you also in what you say of the advantage to Henrietta and Fred. My father is going to write, and I must leave him to do justice to his own cordiality, and proceed to business."

Then came the particulars of freehold and copyhold purchase or lease, repair or disrepair of which Henrietta knew nothing, and cared less; she knew that her mamma was

considered a great heiress, and trusted to her wealth for putting all she pleased in her power; but it was rather alarming to recollect that Uncle Geoffrey would consider it right to make the best terms he could, and that the house might be lost to them while they were bargaining for it.

"Oh, mamma, never mind what he says about its being dear," said she; "I dare say it will not ruin us."

"Not exactly," said Mrs. Langford, smiling; "but gentlemen consider it a disgrace not to make a good bargain; and Uncle Geoffrey must be allowed to have his own way."

"Oh, but mamma, suppose some one else should take it?"

"A village house is not like these summer lodgings, which are snapped up before you can look at them," said Mrs. Langford. "I have no fears but that it is to be had." But Henrietta could not help fancying that her mother would regard it somewhat as a reprieve, if the bargain was to go off independently of any determination of hers.

She had made up her mind to look cheerfully at the scheme, and often talked of it with pleasure, to which the cordial and affectionate letters of her father-in-law and the rest of the family, conduced not a little. She now fully perceived that it had only been from forbearance, that they had not before urged her return, and as she saw how earnestly it was desired by Mr. and Mrs. Langford, reproached herself as for a weakness for not having sooner resolved upon her present step. Henrietta's work was rather to keep up her spirits at the prospect than to prevent her from changing her purpose, which never altered, respecting a return to the neighborhood of Knight Sutton, though whether to the house of the tempting name, was a question which remained in agitation during the rest of the autumn, for as surely as Rome was not built in a day so surely cannot a house be bought or sold in a day, especially when a clever and cautious lawyer acts for one party.

Matters thus dragged on, till the space before the Christmas holidays was reckoned by weeks, instead of months, and as Mrs. Frederick Langford laughingly said, she should be fairly ashamed to meet her boy again at their present home. She therefore easily allowed herself to be persuaded to accept Mr. Langford's invitation to take up her quarters at the Hall, and look about her a little before finally deciding upon the Pleasance. Christmas at Knight Sutton Hall had the greatest charms in the eyes of Henrietta and Frederick; for many a time had they listened to the descriptions given *con amore* by Beatrice Langford, to whom that place had ever been a home, perhaps the more

beloved, because the other half of her life was spent in London.

It was a great disappointment, however, to hear that Mrs. Geoffrey Langford was likely to be detained in London by the state of health of her aunt, Lady Susan St. Leger, whom she did not like to leave, while no other of the family was at hand. This was a cruel stroke, but she could not bear that her husband should miss his yearly holiday, her daughter lose the pleasure of a fortnight with Henrietta, or Mr. and Mrs. Langford be deprived of the visit of their favorite son; and she therefore arranged to go and stay with Lady Susan, while Beatrice and her father went as usual to Knight Sutton.

Mr. Geoffrey Langford offered to escort his sister-in-law from Devonshire, but she did not like his holidays to be so wasted. She had no merely personal apprehensions, and new as railroads were to her, declared herself perfectly willing and able to manage with no companions but her daughter and maid, with whom she was to travel to his house in London, there to be met in a day or two by the two schoolboys, Frederick and his Cousin Alexander, and then proceed all together to Knight Sutton.

Henrietta could scarcely believe that the long-wished-for time was really come, packing up actually commencing, and that her waking would find her under a different roof from that which she had never left. She did not know till now that she had any attachments to the place she had hitherto believed utterly devoid of all interest; but she found she could not bid it farewell without sorrow. There was the old boatman with his rough, kindly courtesy, and his droll ways of speaking; there was the rocky beach where she and her brother had often played on the verge of the ocean, watching with mysterious awe or sportive delight the ripple of the advancing waves, the glorious sea itself, the walks, the woods, the streams, and rocks, which she now believed, as mamma and Uncle Geoffrey had often told her, were more beautiful than anything she was likely to find in Sussex. Other scenes there were, connected with her grandmother, which she grieved much at parting with, but she shunned talking over her regrets, lest she should agitate her mother, whom she watched with great anxiety.

She was glad that so much business was on her hands as to leave little time for dwelling on her feelings, to which she attributed the calm quietness with which she went through the few trying days that immediately preceded their departure. Henrietta felt this constant employment so great a relief to her own spirits, that she was sorry on her own account, as well as her mother's, when

every possible order had been given, every box packed, and nothing was to be done but to sit opposite to each other, on each side of the fire, in the idleness which precedes candle-light. Her mother leaned back in silence, and she watched her with an anxious gaze. She feared to say anything of sympathy with what she supposed her feeling, lest she would make her weep. An indifferent speech would be out of place even if Henrietta herself could have made it, and yet to remain silent was to allow melancholy thoughts to prey upon her. So thought the daughter, longing at the same time that her persuasions were all unsaid.

"Come here, my dear child," said her mother, presently, and Henrietta almost started at the calmness of the voice, and the serenity of the tranquil countenance. She crossed to her mother, and sat down on a low footstool, leaning against her. "You are very much afraid for me," continued Mrs. Langford, as she remarked upon the anxious expression of her face, far different from her own, "but you need not fear, it is all well with me; it would be wrong not to be thankful for those who are not really lost to me as for those who were given to me here."

All Henrietta's consideration for her mother could not prevent her from bursting into tears.

"Oh, mamma, I did not know it would be so like going away from dear grandmamma."

"Try to feel the truth, my dear, that our being near to her depends on whether we are in our duty or not."

"Yes, yes, but this place is so full of her! I do so love it! I did not know it till now!"

"Yes, we must always love it, my dear child; but we are going to our home, Henrietta, to your father's home in life and death, and it must be good for us to be there, with your grandfather, who has wished for us. Knight Sutton is our true home, the one where it is right for us to be."

Henrietta still wept bitterly, and strange it was that it should be she who stood in need of consolation for the fulfillment of her own most ardent wish, and from the very person to whom it was the greatest trial. It was not, however, self-reproach that caused her tears. Her mother's calmness prevented her from having any such misgiving. But attachment to the place she was about to leave, and the recollections, which she accused herself of having slighted, had stirred her feelings. Her mother, who had made up her mind to do what was right, found strength and peace at the moment of trial, when the wayward and untrained spirits of the daughter gave way. Not that she blamed Henrietta, she was rather gratified to

find that she was so much attached to her home and her grandmother, and felt so much with her; and after she had succeeded in some degree in restoring her to composure, they talked long and earnestly over old times and deeper feelings.

CHAPTER IV.

THE journey to London was prosperously performed, and Mrs. Frederick Langford was not over-fatigued when she arrived at Uncle Geoffrey's house at Westminster. The cordiality of their greeting may be imagined, as a visit from Henrietta had been one of the favorite visions of her cousin Beatrice, through her whole life; and the two girls were soon deep in the delights of a conversation in which sense and nonsense had an equal share.

The next day was spent by the two Mrs. Langfords in quiet together, while Henrietta was conducted through a rapid whirl of sight-seeing by Beatrice and Uncle Geoffrey, the latter of whom, to his niece's great amazement, professed to find almost as much novelty in the sights as she did. A short December day, though not what they would have chosen, had this advantage, that the victim could not be as completely fagged and worn out as in a summer's day, and Henrietta was still fresh and in high spirits when they drove home and found to their delight that the two schoolboys had already arrived.

Beatrice met both alike as old friends and almost brothers, but Alexander, though returning her greeting with equal cordiality, looked shyly at the new aunt and cousin, and, as Henrietta suspected, wished them elsewhere. She had heard much of him from Beatrice, and knew that her brother regarded him as a formidable rival; and she was therefore surprised to see that his broad, honest face expressed more good-humor than intellect, and his manners wanted polish. He was tolerably well-featured, with light eyes and dark hair, and though half a year older than his cousin, was much shorter—more perhaps in appearance than reality, from the breadth and squareness of his shoulders, and from not carrying himself well.

Alexander was (as ought previously to have been recorded), the third son of Mr. Roger Langford, the heir of Knight Sutton, at present living at Sutton Leigh, a small house on his father's estate, busied with farming, sporting, and parish business; while his active wife contrived to make a narrow income feed, clothe, and at least half-educate their endless tribe of boys. Roger, the eldest, was at sea: Frederick, the second, in India; and Alexander owed his more learned education to Uncle Geoffrey, who had been

well recompensed by his industry and good conduct. Indeed his attainments had always been so superior to those of his brothers that he might have been considered as a prodigy, had not his Cousin Frederick been always one step before him.

Fred had greater talent, and had been much better taught at home, so that on first going to school, he took and kept the higher place; but this was but a small advantage in his eyes, compared with what he had to endure out of school during his first half year. Unused to any training or companionship save of womankind, he was disconsolate, bewildered, derided in that new rude world; while Alex, accustomed to fight his way among rude brothers, instantly found his level, and even extended a protecting hand to his cousin, who requited it with little gratitude. Soon overcoming his effeminate habits, he grew expert and dexterous, and was equal to Alex in all but main bodily strength; but the spirit of rivalry once excited, had never died away, and with a real friendship and esteem for each other, their names or rather their nicknames had almost become party words among their school-fellows.

Nor was it probable that this competition would be forgotten on this first occasion of spending their holidays together. Fred felt himself open to that most galling accusation of want of manliness, on account at once of his ignorance of country sports, and of his knowledge of accomplishments; but he did not guess at the feeling which made Alexander on his side regard those very accomplishments with a feeling which, if it were not jealousy, was at least very nearly akin to it.

Beatrice Langford had not the slightest claim to beauty. She was very little, and so thin that her papa did her no injustice when he called her "skin and bones;" but her thin brown face, with the aid of a pair of very large, deep Italian-looking eyes, was so full of brilliant expression, and showed such changes of feeling from sad to gay, from sublime to ridiculous, that no one could have wished one feature otherwise. And if instead of being "like the diamond bright," they had been "dull as lead," it would have been little matter to Alex. Beatrice had been, she was still, his friend, his own cousin, more than what he could believe a sister to be if he had one—in short his own little Queen Bee. He had had a monopoly of her; she had trained him in all the civilization which he possessed, and it was with considerable mortification that he thought himself lowered in her eyes by comparison with his old rival, as old a friend of hers, with the same claim to cousinly affection; and instead of understanding only what she had taught him,

familiar with the tastes and pursuits on which she set perhaps too great a value.

Fred did not care nearly as much for Beatrice's preference; it might be that he took it as a matter of course, or, perhaps, that having a sister of his own, he did not need her sympathy; but still it was a point on which he was likely to be sensitive, and thus her favor was likely to be secretly quite as much a matter of competition as their school studies and pastimes.

For instance, dinner was over, and Henrietta was admiring some choice books of prints, such luxuries as Uncle Geoffrey now afforded himself, and which his wife and daughter greatly preferred to the more costly style of living which some people thought befitted them. She called to her brother who was standing by the fire, "Fred, do come and look at this beautiful Albert Durer, of Sintram."

He hesitated, doubting whether Alexander would scorn him for an acquaintance with Albert Durer, but Beatrice added, "Yes, it was an old promise that I would show it to you. There now, look, admire, or be pronounced insensible."

"A wonderful old fellow was that Albert," said Fred, looking and forgetting his foolish false shame in the pleasure of admiration. "Yes; O, how wondrously the expression on death's face changes as it does in the story! How easy it is to see how Fouque must have built it up! Have you seen it, mamma?"

His mother came to admire. Another print was produced, and another, and Fred and Beatrice were eagerly studying the elaborate engravings of the old German, when Alex, annoyed at finding her too much engrossed to have a word for him, came to share their occupation, and took up one of the prints with no practiced hand.

"Take care, Alex, take care!" cried Beatrice, in a sort of excruciated tone; "don't you see what a pinch you are giving it? Only the initiated ought to handle a print; there is a pattern for you," pointing to Fred.

She cut right and left; both looked annoyed, and retreated from the table; Fred thinking how Alex must look down on fingers which possessed any tenderness; Alex provoked at once and pained. Queen Bee's black eyes perceived their power, and gave a flash of laughing triumph.

But Beatrice was not quite in her usual high spirits, for she was very sorry to leave her mother; and when they went up-stairs for the night, she stood long over

the fire talking to her, and listening to certain parting cautions.

"How I wish you could have come, mamma! I am so sure that grandmamma, in her kindness, will tease Aunt Mary to death. You are the only person who can guard her without affronting grandmamma. Now I——"

"Had better let it alone," rejoined Mrs. Geoffrey Langford. "You will do more harm than by letting things take their course. Remember, too, that Aunt Mary was at home there long before you or I knew the place."

"Oh, if that tiresome Aunt Amelia would but have had some consideration! To go out of town and leave Aunt Susan on our hands just when we always go home!"

"We have lamented that often enough," said her mother, smiling. "It is unlucky, but it cannot be too often repeated, that wills and wishes must sometimes bend."

"You say that for me, mamma," said Beatrice. "You think grandmamma and I have too much *will* for each other."

"If you are conscious of that, Bee, I hope that you will bend that willful will of yours."

"I hope I shall," said Beatrice, "but—— Well, I must go to bed. Good-night, mamma."

And Mrs. Geoffrey Langford looked after her daughter anxiously, but she well knew that Beatrice knew her besetting fault, and she trusted to the many fervent resolutions she had made against it.

The next morning the party bade adieu to Mrs. Geoffrey Langford, and set out on their journey to Knight Sutton. They filled a whole railroad carriage, and were a very cheerful party. Alexander and Beatrice sat opposite to each other, talking over Knight Sutton delights with animation, Beatrice ever and anon turning to her other cousins with explanations, or referring to her papa, who was reading the newspaper and talking to Mrs. Frederick Langford.

The day was not long enough for all the talk of the cousins, and the early winter twilight came on before their conversation was exhausted, or they had reached the Allonfield station.

"Here we are!" exclaimed Beatrice, as the train stopped, and at the same moment a loud voice called out: "All right! where are you, Alex?" upon which Alexander tumbled across Henrietta to feel for the handle of the carriage door, replying: "Here, old fellow, let us out. Have you brought Dumpling?" And Uncle Geoffrey and Beatrice exclaimed: "How d'ye do, Carey?"

When Alexander had succeeded in making his exit, Hen-

rietta beheld him shaking hands with a figure not quite his own height, and in its rough great-coat, not unlike a small species of bear. Uncle Geoffrey and Fred handed out the ladies, and sought their appurtenances in the dark, and Henrietta began to give Alex credit for a portion of that which maketh man, when he shoved his brother, admonishing him that there was Aunt Mary, upon which Carey advanced, much encumbered with sheepish shyness, presented a great, rough driving-glove, and shortly and bluntly replied to the soft tones which kindly greeted him, and inquired for all at home.

"Is the Hall carriage come?" asked Alex, and, receiving a gruff affirmative, added: "then, Aunt Mary, you had better come to it while Uncle Geoffrey looks after the luggage," offered his arm with tolerable courtesy, and conducted her to the carriage. "There," said he; "Carey has driven in in our gig, and I suppose Fred and I had better go back with him."

"Is the horse steady?" asked his aunt, anxiously.

"Dumple? To be sure! Never does wrong! Do you, old fellow?" said Alex, patting his old friend.

"And no lamps?"

"Oh, we know the way blindfold, and you might cross Sutton Heath a dozen times without meeting anything but a wheelbarrow full of peat."

"And how is the road now? It used to be very bad in my time."

"Lots of ruts," muttered Carey to his brother, who interpreted it:

"A few ruts this winter, but Dumpling knows all the bad places."

By this time Uncle Geoffrey came up, and instantly perceiving the state of things, said: "I say, Freddy, do you mind changing places with me? I should like to have a peep at Uncle Roger before going up to the house, and then Dumpling's feelings won't be hurt by passing the turn to Sutton Leigh."

Fred could not object, and his mother rejoiced in the belief that Uncle Geoffrey would take the reins, nor did Beatrice undeceive her, though, as the vehicle rattled past the carriage at full speed, she saw Alexander's own flourish of the whip, and knew that her papa was letting the boys have their own way. She had been rather depressed in the morning on leaving her mother, but as she came nearer home her spirits mounted, and she was almost wild with glee. "Aunt Mary, do you know where you are?"

"On Sutton Heath, I presume, from the absence of landmarks."

"Yes, that we are. You dear old place, how d'ye do? You beginning of home! I don't know when it is best coming to you: on a summer's evening, all glowing with purple heath, or a frosty, starlight night like this. There is the Sutton Leigh turn! Hurrah! only a mile further to the gate."

"Where I used to go to meet the boys coming home from school," said her aunt, in a low tone of deep feeling. But she would not sadden their blithe young hearts, and added cheerfully. "Just the same as ever, I see; how well I know the outline of the bank there!"

"Ay, it is your fatherland, too, Aunt Mary! Is there not something inspiring in the very air? Come, Fred, can't you get up a little enthusiasm?"

"Oceans, without getting it up," replied Fred. "I never was more rejoiced in my whole life," and he began to hum "Domum."

"Sing it, sing it; let us join in chorus as homage to Knight Sutton," cried Henrietta.

And the voices began "Domum, Domum, dulce Domum;" even Aunt Mary herself caught the feelings of her young companions, felt herself coming to her own beloved home and parents, half forgot how changed was her situation, and threw herself into the delight of returning.

"Now, Fred," said Henrietta, "let us try those verses that you found a tune for, that begin 'What is home.'"

This also was sung, and by the time it was finished they had reached a gate leading into a long drive through dark beech woods.

"This is the beautiful wood of which I have often told you, Henrietta," said Mrs. Frederick Langford.

"The wood with glades like cathedral aisles," said Henrietta. "O, how delightful it will be to see it come out in leaf!"

"Which I have never seen," said Beatrice. "I tell papa he has made his fortune, and ought to retire, and he says he is too young for it."

"In which I fully agree with him," said her aunt. "I should not like to see him with nothing to do."

"O mamma, Uncle Geoffrey would never be anywhere with nothing to do," said Henrietta.

"No," said her mother, "but people are always happier with work made for them, than with what they make for themselves. Besides, Uncle Geoffrey has too much talent to be spared."

"Ay," said Fred, "I wondered to hear you so devoid of ambition, little Busy Bee."

"It is only Knight Sutton and thinking of May flowers

that makes me so," said Beatrice. "I believe, after all, I should break my heart if papa did retire without——"

"Without what, Bee?"

"Being Lord Chancellor, I suppose," said Henrietta, very seriously. "I am sure I should."

"His being in Parliament will content me for the present," said Beatrice, "for I have been told too often that high principles don't rise in the world, to expect any more. We can be just as proud of him as if he was."

"You are in a wondrously humble and philosophic mood, Queen Bee," said Henrietta; "but where are we now?" added she, as a gate swung back.

"Coming into the paddock," said Beatrice; "don't you see the lights in the house? There, that is the drawing-room window to the right, and that large one the great hall window. Then up-stairs, don't you see that red firelight? That is the south room, which Aunt Mary will be sure to have."

Henrietta did not answer, for there was something that subdued her in the nervous pressure of her mother's hand. The carriage stopped at the door, whence streamed forth light, dazzling to eyes long accustomed to darkness; but in the midst stood a figure which Henrietta could not but have recognized in an instant, even had not old Mr. Langford paid more than one visit to Rocksand. Tall, thin, unbent, with high bald forehead, clear eye, and long, snowy hair; there he was, lifting rather than handing his daughter-in-law from the carriage, and fondly kissing her brow; then he hastily greeted the other occupants of the carriage, while she received the kiss of Mrs. Langford.

They were now in the hall, and turning again to his daughter-in-law, he gave her his arm, and led her into the drawing-room, where he once more embraced her, saying, "Bless you, my own dear Mary!" She clung to him for a moment as if she longed to weep with him, but recovering herself in an instant, she gave her attention to Mrs. Langford, who was trying to administer to her comfort with a degree of bustle and activity which suited well with the alertness of her small figure and the vivacity of the black eyes which still preserved their brightness, though her hair was perfectly white. "Well, Mary, my dear, I hope you are not tired. You had better sit down and take off your furs, or will you go to your room? But where is Geoffrey?"

"He went with Alex and Carey, round by Sutton Leigh," said Beatrice.

"Ha! ha! my little queen, are you there?" said grandpapa, holding out his arms to her. "And," added he, "is not this your first introduction to the twins, grandmamma?

Why, you are grown as fine a pair as I would wish to see on a summer's day. Last time I saw you I could hardly tell you apart, when you both wore straw hats and white trousers. No mistake now, though. Well, I am right glad to have you here."

"Won't you take off some of your wraps, Mary?" proceeded Mrs. Langford, and her daughter-in-law, with a soft "Thank you," passively obeyed. "And you, too, my dear," she added to Henrietta.

"Off with that bonnet, Miss Henrietta," proceeded grandpapa. "Let me see whether you are as like your brother as ever. He has your own face, Mary."

"Do not you think his forehead like——" and she looked to the end of the room where hung the portraits of two young children, the brothers Geoffrey and Frederick. Henrietta had often longed to see it, but now she could attend to nothing but her mamma.

"Like poor dear Frederick?" said grandmamma. "Well, I can't judge by firelight, you know, my dear; but I should say they were both your very image."

"You can't be the image of any one I should like better," said Mr. Langford, turning to them cheerfully, and taking Henrietta's hand. "I wish nothing better than to find you the image of your mamma inside and out."

"Ah, there's Geoffrey!" cried Mrs. Langford, springing up and almost running to meet him."

"Well, Geoffrey, how d'ye do?" added his father with an indescribable tone and look of heartfelt delight. "Left all your cares behind you?"

"Left my wife behind me," said Uncle Geoffrey, making a rueful face.

"Ay, it is a sad business that poor Beatrice cannot come," said both the old people; "but how is poor Lady Susan?"

"As usual, only too nervous to be left with none of the family at hand. Well, Mary, you look tired."

Overcome, Uncle Geoffrey would have said, but he thought the other accusation would answer the same purpose and attract less attention, and it succeeded, for Mrs. Langford proposed to take her up stairs. Henrietta thought that Beatrice would have offered to save her the trouble, but this would not have been at all according to the habits of grandmamma or granddaughter, and Mrs. Langford briskly led the way to a large cheerful-looking room, talking all the time and saying she supposed Henrietta would like to be with her mamma. She nodded to their maid, who was waiting there, and gave her a kindly greeting, stirred the already bright fire into a blaze, and returning to her daughter-in-law who was standing like one in a

dream, she gave her a fond kiss, saying: "There, Mary, I thought you would like to be here."

"Thank you, thank you, you are always kind."

"There now, Mary, don't let yourself be overcome. You would not bring him back again, I know. Come, lie down and rest. There—that is right—and don't think of coming down-stairs. You think your mamma had better not, don't you?"

"Much better not, thank you, grandmamma," said Henrietta, as she assisted in settling her mother on the sofa. "She is tired and overcome now, but she will be herself after a rest."

"And ask for anything you like, my dear. A glass of wine, or cup of coffee; Judith will get you one in a moment. Won't you have a cup of coffee, Mary, my dear?"

"Thank you, no, thank you," said Mrs. Frederick Langford, raising herself. "Indeed I am sorry—it is very foolish." Here the choking sob came again, and she was forced to lie down. Grandmamma stood by, warming a shawl to throw over her, and pitying her in audible whispers. "Poor thing, poor thing! it is very sad for her. There! a pillow, my dear? I'll fetch one out of my room. No? Is her head high enough? Some sal-volatile? Yes, Mary, would you not like some sal-volatile?"

And away she went in search of it, while Henrietta, excessively distressed, knelt by her mother, who, throwing her arms round her neck, wept freely for some moments, then laid her head on the cushions again, saying, "I did not think I was so weak."

"Dearest mamma," said Henrietta, kissing her and feeling very guilty.

"If I have not distressed grandmamma!" said her mother, anxiously. "No, never mind me, my dear, it was fatigue and ——"

Still she could not finish, so painfully did the familiar voices, the unchanged furniture, recall both her happy childhood and the bridal days when she had last entered the house, that it seemed as it were a new thing, a fresh shock to miss the tone that was never to be heard there again. Why should all around be the same, when all within was altered? But it had been only the first few moments that had overwhelmed her, and the sound of Mrs. Langford's returning footsteps recalled her habit of self-control; she thanked her, held out her quivering hand, drank the sal volatile, pronounced herself much better, and asked pardon for having given so much trouble. Mrs. Langford had tears in her eyes as she answered.

"Trouble? my dear child, no such thing! I only wish I could see you better. No doubt it is too much for you,

this coming home the first time; but then you know poor Fred is gone to a better. Ah! well, I see you can't bear to speak of him, and perhaps after all quiet is the best thing. Don't let your mamma think of dressing and coming down, my dear."

There was a little combat on this point, but it ended in Mrs. Frederick Langford yielding, and agreeing to remain up-stairs. Grandmamma would have waited to propose to her each of the dishes that were to appear at table, and hear which she thought would suit her taste; but very fortunately, as Henrietta thought, a bell rang at that moment, which she pronounced to be "the half hour bell," and she hastened away, telling her granddaughter that dinner would be ready at half-past five, and calling the maid outside the door to give her full directions where to procure anything that her mistress might want.

"Dear grandmamma! just like herself!" said Mrs. Frederick Langford. "But Henrietta, my dear," she added, with some alarm, "make haste and dress; you must never be too late in this house!"

Henrietta was not much accustomed to dress to a moment, and she was too anxious about her mamma to make speed with her whole will, and her hair was in no state of forwardness when the dinner bell rang, causing her mamma to start and hasten her with an eager, almost alarmed manner. "You don't know how your grandmamma dislikes being kept waiting," she said.

At last she was ready and running down, found all the rest assembled, evidently waiting for her. Frederick, looking anxious, met her at the door to receive her assurances that their mother was better; the rest inquired, and her apologies were cut short by grandmamma calling them to eat her turkey before it grew cold. The spirits of all the party were perhaps damped by Mrs. Frederick Langford's absence and its cause, for the dinner was not a very lively one, nor the conversation very amusing to Henrietta and Frederick, as it was chiefly on the news of the country neighborhood, in which Uncle Geoffrey showed much interest.

As soon as she was released from the dining-room, Henrietta ran up to her mamma, whom she found refreshed and composed. "But, oh, mamma, is this a good thing for you?" said Henrietta, looking at the red case containing her father's miniature, which had evidently been only just closed on her entrance.

"The very best thing for me, dearest," was the answer now given in her own calm tones. "It does truly make me happier than anything else. No, don't look doubtful,

my Henrietta; if it were repining it might hurt me, but I trust it is not."

"And does this really comfort you, mamma?" said Henrietta, as she pressed the spring, and gazed thoughtfully on the portrait. "O, I cannot fancy that! the more I think, the more I try to realize what it might have been, think what Uncle Geoffrey is to Beatrice, till sometimes, O mamma, I feel quite rebellious!"

"You will be better disciplined in time, my poor child," said her mother, sadly. "As your grandmamma said, who could be so selfish as to wish him here?"

"And can you bear to say so, mamma?"

She clasped her hands and looked up, and Henrietta feared she had gone too far. Both were silent for some little time, until at last the daughter timidly asked: "And was this your old room, mamma?"

"Yes; look in that shelf in the corner; there are all our old childish books. Bring that one," she added, as Henrietta took one out, and opening it, she showed in the fly-leaf the well-written "F. H. Langford" with the giver's name; and below in round hand, scrawled all over the page: "Mary Vivian, the gift of her Cousin Fred." "I believe that you may find that in almost all of them," said she. "I am glad they have been spared from the children at Sutton Leigh. Will you bring me a few more to look over, before you go down again to grandmamma?"

Henrietta did not like to leave her, and lingered while she made a selection for her among the books, and from that fell into another talk, in which they were interrupted by a knock at the door, and the entrance of Mrs. Langford herself. She sat a little time, and asked of health, strength, and diet until she bustled off again to see if there was a good fire in Geoffrey's room, telling Henrietta that tea would soon be ready.

Henrietta's ideas of grandmammas were formed on the placid Mrs. Vivian, naturally rather indolent, and latterly very infirm, although considerably younger than Mrs. Langford; and she stood looking after her in speechless amazement, her mamma laughing at her wonder. "But, my dear child," she said, "I beg you will go down. It will never do to have you staying up here all the evening."

Henrietta was really going this time, when as she opened the door, she was stopped by a new visitor. This was an elderly, respectable-looking maid-servant, old Judith, whose name was well known to her. She had been nursery-maid at Knight Sutton at the time "Miss Mary" arrived from India, and was now what in a more modernized family would have been called ladies'-maid or housekeeper, but

here was a nondescript office, if anything, upper housemaid. How she was loved and respected is known to all who are happy enough to possess a "Judith."

"I beg your pardon, miss," said she, as Henrietta opened the door just before her, and Mrs. Frederick Langford, on hearing her voice, called out, "Oh, Judith! is that you? I was in hopes you were coming to see me."

She advanced with a courtesy, at the same time affectionately taking the thin white hand stretched out to her. "I hope you are better, ma'am. It is something like old times to have you here again."

"Indeed I am very glad to be here, Judith," was the answer, and very glad to see you looking like your own dear self."

"Ah! Miss Mary; I beg your pardon, ma'am; I wish I could see you looking better."

"I shall, I hope, to-morrow, thank you, Judith. But you have not been introduced to Henrietta there."

"But I have often heard of you, Judith," said Henrietta, cordially holding out her hand. Judith took it, and looked at her with affectionate earnestness. "Sure enough, miss," said she, "as missus says, you are the very picture of your mamma when she went away; but I think I see a look of poor Master Frederick too."

"Have you seen my brother, Judith!" asked Henrietta, fearing a second discussion on likenesses.

"Yes, Miss Henrietta; I was coming down from missus' room, when Mr. Geoffrey stopped me to ask how I did, and he said, 'Here's a new acquaintance for you, Judith,' and there was Master Frederick. I should have known him anywhere, and he spoke so cheerful and pleasant. A fine young gentleman he is, to be sure."

"Why, we must be like your grandchildren!" said Henrietta; "but oh! here comes Fred."

And Judith discreetly retreated as Fred entered bearing a summons to his sister to come down to tea, saying that he could scarcely prevail on grandmamma to let him take the message instead of coming herself.

They found Queen Bee perched upon the arm of her grandpapa's chair, with one hand holding by his collar. She had been coaxing him to say Henrietta was the prettiest girl he ever saw, and he was teasing her by declaring he should never see anything like Aunt Mary in her girlish days. Then he called up Henrietta and Fred, and asked them about their home doings, showing so distinct a knowledge of them, that they laughed and stood amazed. "Ah," said grandpapa, "you forgot that I had a Queen Bee to enlighten me. We have plenty to tell each other,

when we go buzzing over the plowed fields together on a sunny morning, haven't we, Busy, Busy Bee?"

Here grandmamma summoned them all to tea. She liked every one to sit round the table and put away work and book, as, for a regular meal, it was rather a long one. Then, when all was over, grandpapa called out, "Come, young ladies, I've been wearying for a tune these three months. I hope you are not too tired to give us one."

"Oh, no, no, grandpapa!" cried Beatrice; "but you must hear Henrietta. It is a great shame of her to play so much better than I do, with all my London masters too."

And in music the greater part of the evening passed away. Beatrice came to her aunt's room to wish her good night, and to hear Henrietta's opinions, which were of great delight and still greater wonder—grandmamma so excessively kind, and grandpapa, oh, he was a grandpapa to be proud of!

CHAPTER V.

It was an agreeable surprise to Henrietta that her mother waked free from headache, very cheerful, and feeling quite able to get up to breakfast. The room looked very bright and pleasant by the first morning light that shone upon the intricate frostwork on the window; and Henrietta, as usual, was too much lost in gazing at the branches of the elms and the last year's rooks' nests, to make the most of her time; so that the bell for prayers rang long before she was ready. Her mamma would not leave her, and remained to help her. Just as they were going down at last, they met Mrs. Langford on her way up with inquiries for poor Mary. She would have almost been better pleased with a slight indisposition than with dawdling; but she kindly accepted Henrietta's apologies, and there was one exclamation of joy from all the assembled party at Mrs. Frederick Langford's unhoped-for entrance.

"Geoffrey, my dear," began Mrs. Langford, as soon as the greetings and congratulations were over, "will you see what is the matter with the lock of this tea-chest?—it has been out of order these three weeks, and I thought you could set it to rights."

While Uncle Geoffrey was pronouncing on its complaints Atkins, the old servant, put in his head.

"If you please, sir, Thomas Parker would be glad to speak to Mr. Geoffrey about his son on the railway."

Away went Mr. Geoffrey to the lower regions, where Thomas Parker awaited him, and as soon as he returned was addressed by his father: "Geoffrey, I put those

papers on the table in the study, if you will look over them when you have time, and tell me what you think of that turnpike trust."

A few moments after the door was thrown wide open, and in burst three boys, shouting with one voice. "Uncle Geoffrey, Uncle Geoffrey, you must come and see which of Vixen's puppies are to be saved."

"Hush, hush, you rogues, hush!" was Uncle Geoffrey's answer; "don't you know that you are come into civilized society? Aunt Mary never saw such wild men of the woods."

"All crazy at the sight of Uncle Geoffrey," said grandmamma."

"Ah, he spoils you all. But come here, Johnny, come and speak to your aunt. There, this is Johnny, and here are Richard and Willie," she added, as they came up and awkwardly gave their hands to their aunt and cousins.

Henrietta was almost bewildered by seeing so many likenesses of Alexander. "How shall I ever know them apart?" said she to Beatrice.

"Like grandmamma's nest of teacups, all alike, only each one size below another," said Beatrice. "However, I don't require you to learn them all at once; only to know Alex and Willie from the rest. Here, Willie, have you nothing to say to me? How are the rabbits?"

Willie, a nice-looking boy of nine or ten years old, of rather slighter make than his brothers, and with darker eyes and hair, came to Queen Bee's side, as if he were very glad to see her, and only slightly discomposed by Henrietta's neighborhood.

John gave the information that papa and Alex were just behind, and in another minute they made their appearance. "Good-morning, sir; good-morning, ma'am," were Uncle Roger's greetings, as he came in. "Ah, Mary, how d'ye do? glad to see you here at last; hope you are better Ah, good-morning, good-morning," as he quickly shook hands with the younger ones. "Good-morning, Geoffrey, I told Martin to take the new drill into the out-field, for I want your opinion whether it is worth keeping."

And thereupon the three gentlemen began a learned discussion on drills, during which Henrietta studied her uncle. She was at first surprised to see him look so young—younger, she thought, than Uncle Geoffrey; but in a moment or two she changed her mind, for though mental labor had thinned and grizzled Uncle Geoffrey's hair, paled his cheek, and traced lines of thought on his broad, high brow, it had not quenched the light that beamed in his eyes, nor subdued the joyous merriment that often played over his countenance, according with the slender, active

figure that might have belonged to a mere boy. Uncle Roger was taller, and much more robust and broad; his hair still untouched with gray, his face ruddy brown, and his features full of good nature, but rather heavy. In his plaid shooting-coat and high gaiters, as he stood by the fire, he looked the model of a country squire; but there was an indescribable family likeness, and something of the same form about the nose and lip, which recalled to Henrietta the face she loved so well in Uncle Geoffrey.

The drill discussion was not concluded when Mrs. Langford gave the signal for the ladies to leave the breakfast table. Henrietta ran up-stairs for her mother's work, and came down again laughing. "I am sure, Queenie," said she, "that your papa chose his trade rightly. He may well be called a great counsel. Besides all the opinions asked of him at breakfast, I have just come across a consultation on the stairs between him and Judith about—what was it about?—some money in a savings' bank."

"Yes," said Beatrice, "Judith has saved a sum that is wondrous in these degenerate days of maids in silk gowns, and she is wise enough to give 'Master Geoffrey' all the management of it. But if you are surprised now, what will you be by the end of the day? See if his advice is not asked in at least fifty matters."

"I'll count," said Henrietta; "what have we had already?" and she took out pencil and paper—"number one, the tea-chest; then the poor man, and the turnpike trust——"

"Vixen's puppies and the drill," suggested her mamma.

"And Judith's money," added Henrietta. "Six already.

"To say nothing of all that will come by the post, and we shall not hear of," said Beatrice; "and look here, what I am going to seal for him, one, two, three—eight letters."

"Why! when could he possibly have written them?"

"Last night after we were gone to bed. It shows how much more grandmamma will let him do than any one else, that she can allow him to sit up with a candle after eleven o'clock. I really believe that there is not another living creature in the world who could do it in this house. There, you may add your own affairs to the list, Henrietta, for he is going to the Pleasance to meet some man of brick and mortar."

"Oh, I wish we could walk there!"

"I dare say we can. I'll manage. Aunt Mary, should you not like Henrietta to go and see the Pleasance?"

"Almost as much as Henrietta would like it herself, Busy Bee," said Aunt Mary; "but I think she should walk to Sutton Leigh to-day."

"Walk to Sutton Leigh!" echoed old Mrs. Langford, entering at the moment; "not you, surely, Mary?"

"Oh no, no, grandmamma," said Beatrice, laughing; she was only talking of Henrietta's doing it."

"Well, and so do, my dears; it will be a very nice thing, if you go this morning before the frost goes off. Your aunt Roger will like to see you, and you may take the little pot of black currant jelly that I wanted to send over for poor Tom's sore mouth."

Beatrice looked at Henrietta and made a face of disgust as she asked. "Have they no currant jelly themselves?"

"Oh no, they never can keep anything in the garden. I don't mean that the boys take the fruit; but between tarts and puddings and desserts, poor Elizabeth can never make any preserves."

"But," objected Queen Bee, "if one of the children is ill, do you think Aunt Roger will like to have us this morning? and the post girl could take the jelly."

"Oh, nonsense, Bee," said Mrs. Langford, somewhat angrily; "you don't like to do it, I see plain enough. It is very hard you can't be as good-natured to our own little cousin as to one of the children in the village."

"Indeed, grandmamma, I did not mean that."

"O no, no, grandmamma," joined in Henrietta, "we shall be very glad to take it. Pray let us."

"Yes," added Beatrice, "if it is really to be of any use, no one can be more willing."

"Of any use?" repeated Mrs. Langford. "No! never mind. I'll send some one."

"No pray do not, dear grandmamma," eagerly exclaimed Henrietta; "I do beg you will let us take it. It will be making me at home directly to let me be useful."

Grandmamma was pacified. "When will you set out?" she asked; "you had better not lose this bright morning."

"We will go directly," said Queen Bee; "we will go by the west turning, so that Henrietta may see the Pleasance."

"My dear! the west turning will be a swamp, and I won't have you getting wet in your feet and catching cold."

"Oh, we have clogs; and besides, the road does not get so dirty since it has been mended. I asked Johnny this morning."

"As if he knew, or cared anything about it!—and you will be late for luncheon. Besides, grandpapa will drive your aunt there the first day she feels equal to it, and Henrietta may see it then. But you will always have your own way."

Henrietta had seldom been more uncomfortable than

during this altercation; and but for reluctance to appear more obliging than her cousin, she would have begged to give up the scheme. Her mother would have interfered in another moment, but the entrance of Uncle Geoffrey gave a sudden turn to affairs.

"Who likes to go to the Pleasance?" said he, as he entered. "All whose curiosity lies that way may prepare their seven-leagued boots."

"Here are the girls dying to go," said Mrs. Langford, as well pleased as if she had not been objecting the minute before.

"Very well. We go by Sutton Leigh; so make haste, maidens." Then, turning to his mother, "Didn't I hear you say you had something to send to Elizabeth, ma'am?"

"Only some currant jelly for little Tom; but if——"

"O grandmamma, that is my charge; pray don't cheat me," exclaimed Henrietta. "If you will lend me a basket, it will travel much better with me than in Uncle Geoffrey's pocket."

"Ay, that will be the proper division of labor," said Uncle Geoffrey, looking well pleased with his niece; "but I thought you were off to get ready."

"Don't keep your uncle waiting, my dear," added her mamma; and Henrietta departed, Beatrice following her to her room, and there exclaiming, "If there is a thing I can't endure, it is going to Sutton Leigh when one of the children is poorly! It is always bad enough——"

"Bad enough! O Busy Bee!" cried Henrietta, quite unprepared to hear of any flaw in her paradise.

"You will soon see what I mean. The host of boys in the way; the wooden bricks and black horses spotted with white wafers that you break your shins over, the marbles that roll away under your feet, the whips that crack in your ears, the universal air of nursery that pervades the house. It is worse in the morning, too; for one is always whining over *sum, es, est*, and another over his spelling. Oh, if I had eleven brothers in a small house, I should soon turn misanthrope. But you are laughing instead of getting ready."

"So are you."

"My things will be on in a quarter of the time you take. I'll tell you what, Henrietta, the Queen Bee allows no drones, and I shall teach you to 'improve each shining hour;' for nothing will get you into such dire disgrace here as to be always behind time. Besides, it is a great shame to waste papa's time. Now, here is your shawl ready folded, and now I will trust you to put on your boots and bonnet by yourself."

In five minutes the Queen Bee flew back again, and

found Henrietta still measuring the length of her bonnet strings before the glass. She hunted her down-stairs at last, and found the two uncles and grandpapa at the door, playing with the various dogs, small and great, that usually waited there. Fred and the other boys had gone out together some time since, and the party now set forth, the three gentlemen walking together first. Henrietta turned as soon as she had gone a sufficient distance that she might study the aspect of the house. It did not quite fulfill her expectations; it was neither remarkable for age nor beauty; the masonry was in a sort of chess-board pattern, alternate squares of freestone and of flints, the windows were not casements as she thought they ought to have been, and the long wing, or rather excrescence, which contained the drawing room, was by no means ornamental.

It was a respectable, comfortable mansion, and that was all that was to be said in its praise, and Beatrice's affection had so embellished it in description, that it was no wonder that Henrietta felt slightly disappointed. She had had some expectation, too, of seeing it in the midst of a park, instead of which the carriage-drive along which they were walking, only skirted a rather large grass field, full of elm-trees, and known by the less dignified name of the paddock. But she would not confess the failure of her expectations even to herself, and as Beatrice was evidently looking for some expressions of admiration, she said the road must be very pretty in summer.

"Especially when this bank is one forest of fox-gloves," said Queen Bee. "Only think! Uncle Roger and the farmer faction wanted grandpapa to have this hedge-row grubbed up and turned into a plain dead fence; but I carried the day, and I dare say Aunt Mary will be as much obliged to me as the boys, who would have lost their grand preserve of stoats and rabbits. But here are the outfield and the drill."

And going through a small gate at the corner of the paddock, they entered a large plowed field, traversed by a footpath raised and graveled, so as to be high and dry, which was well for the two girls, as the gentlemen left them to march up and down there by themselves, whilst they were discussing the merits of the brilliant blue machine which was traveling along the furrows. It was rather a trial of patience, but Beatrice was used to it, and Henrietta was in a temper to be pleased with anything.

At last the inspection was concluded, and Mr. Langford came to his granddaughters, leaving his two sons to finish their last words with Martin.

"Well, young ladies," said he, "this is fine drilling, in

patience at least. I only wish my wheat may be as well drilled with Uncle Roger's new-fangled machines."

"That is right, grandpapa," said Queen Bee; "you hate them as much as I do, don't you, now?"

"She is afraid they will make honey by steam," said grandpapa, "and render bees a work of supererogation."

"They are doing what they can toward it," said Beatrice. "Why, when Mr. Carey took us to see his hives, I declare I had quite a fellow-feeling for my poor subjects, boxed up in glass, with all their privacy destroyed. And they won't even let them swarm their own way—a most unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the subject."

"Well, done Queenie," said Mr. Langford, laughing; "a capital champion. And so you don't look forward to the time when we are to have our hay made by one machine, our sheep washed by another, our turkeys crammed by a third—ay, and even the trouble of bird-starving saved us?"

"Bird-starving!" repeated Henrietta

"Yes; or keeping a few birds, according to the mother's elegant diminutive," said Beatrice, "serving as live scarecrows."

"I should have thought a scarecrow would have answered the purpose," said Henrietta.

"This is one that is full of gunpowder, and fires off every ten minutes," said grandpapa; "but I told Uncle Roger we would have none of them here unless he was prepared to see one his boys blown up at every third explosion."

"Is Uncle Roger so very fond of machines?" said Henrietta.

"He goes about to cattle shows and agricultural meetings, and comes home with his pockets crammed with papers of new inventions, which I leave him to try as long as he does not empty my pockets too fast."

"Don't they succeed, then?" said Henrietta.

"Why—ay—I must confess we get decent crops enough. And once we achieved a prize ox—such a disgusting overgrown beast, that I could not bear the sight of it, and told Uncle Roger I would have no more such waste of good victuals, puffing up the ox instead of the frog."

Henrietta was not quite certain whether all this was meant in jest or earnest; and perhaps the truth was, that though grandpapa had little liking for new plans, he was too wise not to adopt those which possessed manifest advantage, and only indulged himself in a good deal of playful grumbling, which greatly teased Uncle Roger.

"There is Sutton Leigh," said grandpapa, as they came in sight of a low white house among farm buildings. "Well, Henrietta, are you prepared for an introduction to

an aunt and half a dozen cousins, and Jessie Carey into the bargain?"

"Jessie Carey!" exclaimed Beatrice, in a tone of dismay.

"Did you not know she was there? Why they always send Carey over for her with the gig if there is but a toothache the matter at Sutton Leigh."

"Is she one of Aunt Roger's nieces!" asked Henrietta.

"Yes," said Beatrice. "And—oh, grandpapa, don't look at me in that way. Where is the use of being your pet if I may not tell my mind?"

"I won't have Herietta prejudiced," said Mr. Langford. "Don't listen to her, my dear; and I'll tell you what Jessie Carey is. She is an honest, good-natured girl as ever lived; always ready to help every one, never thinking of trouble, without an atom of selfishness."

"Now for the *but*, grandpapa," cried Beatrice, "I allow all that, only grant me the *but*."

"But Queen Bee, chancing to be a conceited little Londoner, looks down on us poor country folks as unfit for her most refined and intellectual society."

"Oh," grandpapa, that is not fair! Indeed, you don't really believe that. Oh, say you don't!" And Beatrice's black eyes were full of tears.

"If I do not believe the whole you believe the half, Miss Bee," and he added, half whispering, "take care some of us do not believe the other half. But don't look dismal on the matter, only put it into one of your waxen cells, and don't lose sight of it. And if it is any comfort to you I will allow that perhaps poor Jessie is not the most entertaining companion for you. Her vanity maggots are not of the same sort as yours."

They had by this time nearly reached Sutton Leigh, a building little altered from the farm-house it had originally been, with a small garden in front and a narrow footpath up to the door. As soon as they came in sight there was a general rush forward of little boys in brown holland, all darting on Uncle Geoffrey, and holding him fast by legs and arms.

"Let me loose, you varlets," he cried, and disengaging one hand, in another moment drew from his capacious pocket a beautiful red ball, which he sent bounding over their heads, and dancing far away with all the urchins in pursuit.

At the same moment the rosy, portly, good-humored Mrs. Roger Langford appeared at the door, welcoming them cordially, and, as usual, accusing Uncle Geoffrey of spoiling her boys. Henrietta thought she had never seen a happier face than hers in the midst of cares, and children,

and a drawing-room which, with its faded furniture strewed with toys, had in fact, as Beatrice said, something of the appearance of a nursery.

Little Tom, the youngest, was sitting on the lap of his cousin, Jessie Carey, at whom Henrietta looked with some curiosity. She was a pretty girl of twenty, with a brilliant gypsy complexion, fine black hair, and a face which looked as good natured as every other inhabitant of Sutton Leigh.

But it would be tedious to describe a visit which was actually very tedious to Beatrice, and would have been the same to Henrietta but for its novelty. Aunt Roger asked all particulars about Mrs. Frederick Langford, then of Aunt Geoffrey and Lady Susan St. Leger, and then gave the history of the misfortunes of little Tom, who was by this time on Uncle Geoffrey's knee, looking at himself in the inside of the case of his watch. Henrietta's list, too, was considerably lengthened; for Uncle Geoffrey advised upon a smokey chimney, mended a cart of Charlie's, and assisted Willie in a puzzling Latin exercise.

It was almost one o'clock, and as a certain sound of clattering plates was heard in the next room, Aunt Roger begged her guests to come in to luncheon. Uncle Geoffrey accepted for the girls who were to walk on with him; but Mr. Langford, no eater of luncheons, returned to his own affairs at home. Henrietta found the meal was the family dinner. She had hardly ever been seated at one so plain, or on so long a table; and she was not only surprised, but tormented herself by an uncomfortable and uncalled-for fancy, that her hosts must be supposing her to be remarking on deficiencies. The younger children were not so perfect in the management of knife, fork, and spoon, as to be pleasant to watch; nor was the matter mended by the attempts at correction made from time to time by their father and Jessie. But Henrietta endured better than Beatrice, whose face ill concealed an expression of disgust and weariness, and who maintained a silence very unlike her usual habits.

At last Uncle Geoffrey, to the joy of both, proposed to pursue their walk, and they took leave. Queen Bee rejoiced as soon as they had quited the house that the boys were too well occupied with their pudding to wish to accompany them, but she did not venture on any further remarks before her papa. He gave a long whistle, and then turned to point out all the interesting localities to Henrietta. There was something to tell of every field, every tree, or every villager, with whom he exchanged his hearty greeting. If it were only a name, it recalled some story of mamma's, some tradition handed on by Beatrice. Never

was walk more delightful; and the girls were almost sorry to find themselves at the green gate of the Pleasance, leading to a gravel road, great part of which had been usurped by the long shoots of the evergreens. Indeed, the place could hardly be said to correspond in appearance to its name, in its chilly, deserted, unfurnished state; but the girls were resolved to admire, and while Uncle Geoffrey was deep in the subject of repairs and deficiencies, they flitted about from garret to cellar, making plans, fixing on rooms, and seeing possibilities, in complete enjoyment. But even this could not last forever; and, rather tired and very cold, they seated themselves on a step of the stairs, and there built a marvelous castle of delight for next summer; then talked over the Sutton Leigh household, discussed the last books they had read, and had just begun to yawn, when Uncle Geoffrey, being more merciful than most busy men, concluded his business, and summoned them to return home. Their homeward walk was by a different road, through the village of Knight Sutton itself, which Henrietta had not yet seen. It was a long, straggling street, the cottages for the most part in gardens, and with a general look of comfort and neatness that showed the care of the proprietor.

"Oh, there is the church," said Henrietta, in a subdued voice, as they came to the low flint wall that fenced in the slightly rising ground occupied by the churchyard, surrounded by a whole grove of noble elm-trees, amongst which could just be seen the small old church, with its large deep porch and curious low tower.

"The door is open," said Beatrice; "I suppose they are bringing in the holly for Christmas. Should you like to look in, Henrietta?"

"I do not know," said she, looking at her uncle. "Mamma——"

"I thing it might be less trying if she has not to feel for you and herself too," said Uncle Geoffrey.

"I am sure I should wish it very much," said Henrietta, and they entered the low, dark, solemn-looking building, the massive stone columns and low-browed arches of which had in them something peculiarly awful and impressive to Henrietta's present state of mind. Uncle Geoffrey led her on into the chancel, where, among numerous mural tablets recording the names of different members of the Langford family, was one chiefly noticeable for the superior taste of its Gothic canopy, and which bore the name of Frederick Henry Langford, with the date of his death, and his age, only twenty-six. One of the large flat stones below also had the initials F. H. L., and the date of the year. Henrietta stood and looked in deep silence,

Beatrice watching her earnestly and kindly, and her uncle's thoughts almost as much as hers, on what might have been. Her father had been so near him in age, so constantly his companion, so entirely one in mind and temper, that he had been far more to him than his elder brother, and his death had been the one great sorrow of Uncle Geoffrey's life.

The first sound which broke the stillness was the opening of the door, as the old clerk's wife entered with a huge basket of holly, and dragging a mighty branch behind her. Uncle Geoffrey nodded in reply to her courtesy, and gave his daughter a glance which sent her to the other end of the church to assist in the Christmas decorations.

Henrietta turned her liquid eyes upon her uncle. "This is coming very near him," said she in a low voice. "Uncle, I wish I might be quite sure that he knows me."

"Do not wish too much for certainty which has not been granted to us," said Uncle Geoffrey. "Think rather of 'I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.'"

"But, uncle, you would not have me not believe that he is near to me, and knows how—how I would have loved him, and how I do love him," she added, while the tears rose to her eyes.

"It may be so, my dear, and it is a thought which is not only most comforting, but good for us, as bringing us closer to the unseen world; but it has not been positively revealed, and it seems to me better to dwell on that time when the meeting with him is so far certain that it depends but on ourselves."

To many persons, Uncle Geoffrey would scarce have spoken in this way; but he was aware of a certain tendency in Henrietta's mind to merge the reverence and respect she owed to her parents, in a dreamy, unpractical feeling for the father whom she had never known, whose voice she had never heard, and from whom she had not one precept to obey; while she lost sight of that honor and duty which was daily called for toward her mother. It was in honor, not in love, that Henrietta was wanting, and with how many daughters is it not the same? It was, therefore, that though even to himself it seemed harsh, and cost him a pang, Mr. Geoffrey Langford resolved that his niece's first visit to her father's grave should not be spent in fruitless dreams of him or of his presence, alluring because involving neither self-reproach nor resolution; but in thoughts which might lead to action, to humility, and to the yielding up of self-will.

Henrietta looked very thoughtful. "That time is so far away!" said she.

"How do you know that?" said her uncle in the deep,

low tone that brought the full perception that "it is nigh, even at the doors."

She gave a sort of shuddering sigh, the reality being doubly brought home to her by the remembrance of the suddenness of her father's summons.

"It is awful said she, "I cannot bear to think of it."

"Henrietta," said her uncle, solemnly, "guard yourself from being so satisfied with a dream of the present as to lose sight of the real, most real future." He paused, and as she did not speak, went on: "The present, which is the means of attaining to that future, is one not of visions and thoughts, but of deeds."

Again Henrietta sighed, but presently she said: "But, uncle, that would bring us back to the world of sense. Are we not to pray that we may in heart and mind ascend?"

"Yes, but to dwell with Whom? Not to stop short with objects once of earthly affection."

"Then would you not have me think of him at all?" said she, almost reproachfully.

"I would have you take care, Henrietta, lest the thought should absord the love and trust due to your true and Heavenly Father, and at the same time you forget what on earth is owed to your mother. Do you think that is what your father would desire?"

"You mean," said she, sadly, "that while I do not think enough of God, and while I love my own way so well, I have no right to dwell on the thought I love best, the thought that he is near."

"Take it rather as a caution than as a blame," said Uncle Geoffrey. A long silence ensued, during which Henrietta thought deeply on the new idea opened to her. Her vision, for it could not be called her memory of her father, had in fact been too highly enshrined in her mind, too much worshiped, she had deemed this devotion a virtue, and fostered as it was by the solitude of her life, and the temper of her mother's mind, the truth was as Uncle Geoffrey had hinted, and she began to perceive it, but still it was most unwillingly, for the thought was cherished so as to be almost part of herself. Uncle Geoffrey's manner was so kind that she could not be vexed with him, but she was disappointed, for she had hoped for a narration of some part of her father's history, and for the indulgence of that soft sorrow which has in it little pain. Instead of this, she was bidden to quit her beloved world, to soar above it, or to seek for a duty which she had rather not believe that she neglected, though—no, she did not like to look deeper.

Mr. Geoffrey Langford gave her time for thought, though of what nature it might be he could not guess, and then

said, "One thing more before we leave this place. Whether Fred cheerfully obeys the fifth commandment in its full extent, may often, as I believe, depend on your influence. Will you try to exert it in the right way."

"You mean when he wishes to do things like other boys of his age," said Henrietta.

"Yes. Think yourself, and lead him to think, that obedience is better than what he fancies manliness. Teach him to give up pleasure for the sake of obedience, and you will do your work as a sister and daughter."

While Uncle Geoffrey was speaking, Beatrice's operations with the holly had brought her a good deal nearer to them, and at the same time the church door opened, and a gentleman entered, whom the first glance showed Henrietta to be Mr. Franklin, the clergyman of the parish, of whom she had heard so much. He advanced on seeing Beatrice with the holly in her hand. "Miss Langford! This is just what I was wishing."

"I was just helping old Martha," said Beatrice; "we came in to show my cousin the church, and——"

By this time the others had advanced.

"How well the church looks this dark afternoon," said Uncle Geoffrey, speaking in a low tone; "it is quite the moment to choose for seeing it for the first time. But you are very early in beginning your adornments."

"I thought if I had the evergreens here in time, I might see a little to the arrangement myself," said Mr. Franklin, "but I am afraid I know very little about the matter. Miss Langford, I wish you would assist us with your taste."

Beatrice and Henrietta looked at each other, and their eyes sparkled with delight. "I should like it exceedingly," said the former; "I was just thinking what capabilities there are. And Henrietta will do it beautifully."

"Then will you really be kind enough to come to-morrow, and see what can be done?"

"Yes, we will come as soon as ever breakfast is over, and work hard," said Queen Bee. "And we will make Alex and Fred come too, to do the places that are out of reach."

"Thank you, thank you," said Mr. Franklin eagerly; "I assure you the matter was quite upon my mind, for the old lady there, good as she is, has certainly not the best taste in church dressing."

"And pray, Mr. Franklin, let us have a step-ladder, for I am sure there ought to be festoons round those two columns of the chancel arch. Look, papa, do not you think so?"

"You might put a twining wreath like the columns at

Roslin chapel," said her papa, "and I should try how much I could cover the Dutch cherubs at the head of the tables of commandments."

"Oh, and don't you see," said Henrietta, "there in front of the altar is a space where I really think we might make the cross and 'I. H. C.' in holly."

"But could you, Henrietta?" asked Beatrice.

"O yes, I know I can; I made 'M. L.' in roses on mamma's last birthday, and set it up over the chimney-piece in the drawing-room, and I am sure we could contrive this. How appropriate it will look!"

"Ah!" said Mr. Franklin, "I have heard of such things, but I had always considered them as quite above our powers."

"They would be, without Henrietta," said Queen Bee, "but she was always excellent at wreath weaving, and and all those things that belong to choice taste and clever fingers. Only let us have plenty of the wherewithal, and we will do our work so as to amaze the parish."

"And now," said Uncle Geoffrey, "we must be walking home, my young ladies. It is getting quite dark."

"It was indeed, for as they left the church the sunlight was fast fading on the horizon, and Venus was already shining forth in pure, quiet beauty on the clear blue sky. Mr. Franklin walked a considerable part of the way home with them, adding to Henrietta's list by asking counsel about a damp spot in the wall of the church and on the measures to be adopted with a refractory farmer.

By the time they reached home, evening was fast closing in; and at the sound of their entrance Mrs. Langford and Frederick both came to meet them in the hall, the former asking anxiously whether they had not been lingering in the cold and damp, inspecting the clogs to see that they were dry, and feeling if the fingers were cold. She then ordered the two girls up-stairs to dress before going into the drawing-room with their things on and told Henrietta to remember that dinner would be at half past five.

"Is mamma gone up?" asked Henrietta.

"Yes, my dear, long ago; she has been out with your grandpapa, and is gone to rest herself."

"And how long have you been at home, Fred?" said Queen Bee. "Why you have performed your toilet already! Why did you not come to meet us?"

"I should have had a long spy-glass to see which way you were gone," said Fred, in a tone which, to Henrietta's ears, implied that he was not quite pleased, and then, following his sister up-stairs, he went on to her, "I wish I had never come in, but it was about three and Alex and Carey thought we might as well get a bit of something for

luncheon, and thereby they had the pleasure of seeing mamma send her pretty dear up to change his shoes and stockings. So there was an end of me for the day. I declare it is getting too absurd. Do persuade mamma that I am not made of sugar candy."

With Uncle Geoffrey's admonitions fresh in her mind, these complaints sounded painfully in Henrietta's ears, and she would gladly have soothed away his irritation; but, however convenient Judith might find the stairs for private conferences, they did not appear to her equally appropriate, especially when at the very moment grandpapa was coming down from above and grandmamma up from below. Both she and Fred therefore retreated into their mamma's room, where they found her sitting on a low stool by the fire, reading by its light one of the old childish books, of which she seemed never to weary. Fred's petulance, to do him justice, never could endure the charm of her presence, and his brow was as bright and open as his sister's, as he came forward, hoping that she was not tired.

"Quite the contrary, thank you, my dear," said she, smiling. "I enjoyed my walk exceedingly."

"A walk!" exclaimed Henrietta.

"A crawl, perhaps you would call it, but a delightful crawl it was with grandpapa up and down what we used to call the sun walk, by the kitchen garden wall. And now, Pussy-cat, Pussy-cat, where have you been?"

"I've been to Sutton Leigh, with the good queen," answered Henrietta, gayly. "I have seen everything—Sutton Leigh, and the Pleasance, and the church! And, mamma, Mr. Franklin has asked us to go and dress the church for Christmas. Is not that what of all things is delightful? Only think of church-decking! What I have read and and heard of, but I always thought it something too great and too happy for me ever to do."

"I hope you will be able to succeed in it," said her mamma. "What a treat it will be to see your work on Sunday."

"And you are to help, too, Fred; you and Alexander are to come and reach the high places for us. But do tell us your adventures."

Fred had been all over the farm; had been introduced to the whole live stock, including ferrets and the tame hedge-hog; visited the plantations, and assisted at the killing of a stoat; cut his name out on the bark of the old pollard; and, in short, had been supremely happy. He "was just going to see Dumpling and Vixen's puppies at Sutton Leigh, when——"

"When I caught you, my poor by," said his mamma;

"and very cruel it was, I allow, but I thought you might have gone out again."

"I had no other thick shoes up-stairs; but really, mamma, no one thinks of minding those things."

"You should have seen him, Henrietta," said his mother; "his shoes looked as if he had been walking through the river."

"Well, but so were all the others," said Fred.

"Very likely, but they are more used to it; and, besides, they are such sturdy fellows. I should as soon think of a deal board catching cold. But you—if there is as much substance in you, it is all height: and you know, Fred, you would find it considerably more tiresome to be laid up with a bad cold."

"I never catch cold," said Fred.

"Boys always say so," said Mrs. Frederick Langford; "it is a—what shall I call it?—a puerile delusion, which their mammas can always defeat when they choose by a formidable list of colds and coughs; but I won't put you in mind of how often you have sat with your feet on the fender croaking like an old raven, and solacing yourself with stick-licorice and 'Ivanhoe.'"

"You had better allow him to proceed in his pursuit of a cold, mamma," said Henrietta, "just to see how grandmamma will nurse it."

A knock at the door here put an end to the conversation, by announcing the arrival of Bennet, Mrs. Frederick Langford's maid, who had come in such good time that Henrietta was, for once in her life, full dressed a whole quarter of an hour before dinner-time. Nor was her involuntary punctuality without a reward, for the interval of waiting for dinner, sitting round the fire, was particularly enjoyed by Mr. and Mrs. Langford; and Uncle Geoffrey, therefore, always contrived to make it a leisure time; and there was so much merriment in talking over the walk, and discussing the plans for the Pleasance, that Henrietta resolved never again to miss such a pleasant reunion by her own tardiness.

Nor was the evening less agreeable. Henrietta pleased grandmamma by getting her carpet-work out of some puzzle, and by flying across the room to fetch the tea-chest; she delighted grandpapa by her singing, and by finding his spectacles for him; she did quite a praiseworthy piece of her own crochet purse, and laughed a great deal at the battle that was going on between Queen Bee and Fred about the hero of some new book. She kept her list of Uncle Geoffrey's manifold applicants on the table before her, and had the pleasure of increasing it by two men, business unknown, who sent to ask him to come and speak to

them; by a loud and eager appeal from Fred and Beatrice to decide their contest, by a question of taste on the shades of her grandmamma's carpet-work, and by her own query how to translate a difficult German passage which had baffled herself, mamma, and Fred.

However, Queen Bee's number, fifty, had not been attained, and her majesty was obliged to declare that she meant in a week instead of a day, for which reason the catalogue was written out fair, to be continued.

Mrs. Frederick Langford thought herself well recompensed for the pain her resolution had cost her, by the pleasure that Mr. and Mrs. Langford evidently took in her son and daughter, by the brightness of her two children's own faces, and especially when Henrietta murmured in her sleep something about "delightful," "bright leaves and red berries," and then, "and 'tis for my own dear papa."

And after all, in the attainment of their fondest wish, were Henrietta and Frederick as serenely happy as she was.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRISTMAS EVE, which was also a Saturday, dawned brightly on Henrietta, but even her eagerness for her new employment could not so far overcome her habitual dilatoriness as not to annoy her cousin, Busy Bee, even to a degree of very unnecessary fidgeting when there was any work in hand. She sat on thorns all breakfast time, devoured what her grandpapa called a sparrow's allowance, swallowed her tea scalding, and thereby gained nothing but leisure to fret at the deliberation with which Henrietta cut her bread into little square dice, and spread her butter on them as if each piece was to serve as a model for future generations.

The subject of conversation was not precisely calculated to soothe her spirits. Grandmamma was talking of giving a young party—a New Year's party, on Monday week, the second of January. "It would be pleasant for the young people," she thought, "if Mary did not think it would be too much for her."

Beatrice looked despairingly at her aunt, well knowing what her answer would be, that it would not be at all too much for her, that she should be very glad to see her former neighbors, and that it would be a great treat to Henrietta and Fred.

"We will have the carpet up in the dining-room," added Mrs. Langford, "and Daniels, the carpenter, shall

bring his violin, and we can get up a nice little set for a dance."

"Oh thank you, grandmamma," cried Henrietta eagerly, as Mrs. Langford looked at her.

"Poor innocent, you little know!" murmured Queen Bee to herself.

"That is right, Henrietta," said Mrs. Langford, "I like to see young people like young people, not above a dance now and then—all in moderation."

"Above dancing," said grandpapa, who, perhaps, took this as a reflection on his pet, Queen Bee, "that is what you call being on the high rope, isn't it?"

Beatrice, though feeling excessively savage, could not help laughing.

"Are you on the the high rope, Queenie?" asked Fred, who sat next to her; "do you despise the light fantastic——?"

"I don't know; I do not mind it *much*," was all she could bring herself to say, though she could not venture to be more decidedly ungracious before her father. "Not much in itself," she added, in a lower tone, as the conversation grew lowder, "it is the people, Philip Carey, and all—but hush! listen!"

He did so, and heard Careys, Dittons, Evanses, etc., enumerated, and at each name Beatrice, looked gloomier, but she was not observed, for her Aunt Mary had much to hear about the present state of the families, and the stream of conversation flowed away from the *fete*.

The meal was at last concluded, and Beatrice in great haste ordered Frederick off to Sutton Leigh, with a message to Alex to meet them at the church, and bring as much holly as he could, and his great knife. "Bring him safe," said she, "for if you fail, and prove a corby messenger, I promise you worse than the sharpest sting of the most angry bee."

"Away she ran to fetch her bonnet and shawl, while Henrietta walked up after her, saying she would just fetch her mamma's writing-case down for her, and then get ready directly. On coming down, she could not help waiting a moment before advancing to the table, to hear what was passing between her mother and uncle.

"Do you like for me to drive you down to the church today?" he asked.

"Thank you," she answered, raising her mild blue eyes, "I think not."

"Remember, it will be perfectly convenient, and do just what suits you," said he, in his voice of kind solicitude.

"Thank you very much, Geoffrey," she replied, in an earnest tone, "but indeed I had better go for the first time

to the service, especially on such a day as to-morrow, when thoughts *must* be in better order."

"I understand," said Uncle Geoffrey; and Henrietta, putting down the writing-case, retreated with downcast eyes, with a moment's perception of the higher tone of mind to which he had tried to raise her.

In the hall she found Mrs. Langford engaged in moving her precious family of plants from their night quarters near the fire to the bright sunshine near the window. Henrietta seeing her lifting heavy flower-pots, instantly sprung forward with, "O grandmamma, let me help."

Little as Mrs. Langford was wont to allow herself to be assisted, she was gratified with the obliging offer, and Henrietta had carried the myrtle, the old-fashioned oak-leafed geranium, with its fragrant, deeply indented leaves, a grim-looking cactus, and two or three more, and was deep in the story of the orange-tree, the pip of which had been planted by Uncle Geoffrey at five years old, but which never seemed likely to grow beyond the size of a tolerable currant-bush, when Beatrice came down and beheld her with consternation—"Henrietta! Henrietta! what are you about?" cried she, breaking full into the story. "Do make haste."

"I will come in a minute," said Henrietta, who was assisting in adjusting the prop to which the old daphne was tied.

"Don't stop for me, my dear," said Mrs. Langford: "there, don't let me be in your way."

"Oh, grandmamma, I like to do this very much."

"But, Henrietta," persisted the despotic Queen Bee, "we really ought to be there."

"What is all this about?" said grandmamma, not particularly well pleased. "There, go, go, my dear; I don't want any more, thank you; what are you in such a fuss for now, going out all day again?"

"Yes, grandmamma," said Beatrice, "did not you hear that Mr. Franklin asked us to dress the church for to-morrow? and we must not waste time in these short days."

"Dress the church! Well, I suppose you must have your own way, but I never heard of such things in my younger days. Young ladies are very different now."

Beatrice drove Henrietta up-stairs with a renewed "Do make haste!" and then replied in a tone of argument and irritation, "I do not see why young ladies should not like dressing churches for festivals better than dressing themselves for balls and dances!"

True as the speech was, how would Beatrice have liked

to have seen her father or mother stand before her at that moment?

"Ah, well! it is all very well," said grandmamma, shaking her head, as she always did when out-argued by Beatrice, "you girls think yourselves so clever, there is no talking to you; but I think you had much better let old Martha alone; she has done it well enough before ever you were born, and such a litter as you will make! The church won't be fit to be seen to-morrow! All day in that cold damp place too! I wonder Mary could consent, Henrietta looks very delicate."

"O no grandmamma, she is quite strong, very strong, indeed."

"I am sure she is hoarse this morning," proceeded Mrs. Langford; "I shall speak to her mamma."

"O don't, pray, grandmamma; she would be so disappointed! And what would Mr. Franklin do?"

"O very well, I promise you, as he has done before," said Mrs. Langford, hastening off to the drawing-room, while her granddaughter darted up-stairs to hurry Henrietta out of the house before a prohibition could arrive. It was what Henrietta had too often assisted Fred in doing to have many scruples, besides which she knew how grieved her mamma would be to be obliged to stop her, and how glad to find her safe out of reach; so she let her cousin heap on shawls, fur cuffs, and bows in a far less leisurely and discriminating manner than was usual with her.

"It would be absolute sneaking (to use an elegant word), I suppose," said Beatrice, "to go down the back stairs."

"True," said Henrietta, "we will even take the bull by the horns."

"And trust to our heels," said Beatrice, stealthily opening the door; "the coast is clear, and I know both your mamma and my papa will not stop us if they can help it. One, two, three, and away!"

Off they flew, down the stairs, across the hall, and up the long green walk, before they ventured to stop for Henrietta to put on her gloves, and take up the boa that was dragging behind her like a huge serpent. And after all, there was no need for their flight; they might have gone openly and with clear consciences, had they but properly and submissively waited the decision of their elders. Mr. Geoffrey Langford, who did not know how ill his daughter had been behaving, would have been very sorry to interfere with the plan, and easily reconciled his mother to it, in his own cheerful, pleasant way. Indeed, her opposition had been entirely caused by Beatrice herself; she had not once thought of objecting when it had been first mentioned

the evening before, and had not Beatrice first fidgeted and then argued, would only have regarded it as a pleasant way of occupying their morning.

"I could scold you, Miss Drone," said Beatrice, when the two girls had set themselves to rights and recovered breath; "it was all the fault of your dawdling."

"Well, perhaps it was," said Henrietta, "but you know I could not see grandmamma lifting those flower-pots without offering to help her."

"How many more times shall I have to tell you that grandmamma hates to be helped?"

"Then she was very kind to me," replied Henrietta.

"I see how it will be," said Beatrice, smiling, "you will be grandmamma's pet, and it will be a just division. I never yet could get her to let me help her in anything, she is so resolutely independent."

Queen Bee did not take into account how often her service was either grudgingly offered, or else when she came with a good will, it was also with a way, it might be better, it might be worse, but in which she was determined to have the thing done, and against which grandmamma was of course equally resolute.

"She is an amazing person!" said Henrietta, musingly. "Is she eighty yet?"

"Seventy-nine," said Beatrice, "and grandpapa eighty two. I always say I think we should get the prize in a show of grandfathers and mothers, if there was one like Uncle Roger's fat cattle shows. You know she thinks nothing of walking twice to church on Sunday, and all over the village besides when there is anybody ill. But here is the Sutton Leigh path. Let me see if those boys are to be trusted. Yes, yes, that's right! Capital!" cried she, in high glee; "here is Birnam Wood coming across the field." And springing on one of the bars of the gate near the top, she flourished her handkerchief chanting or singing,

> "Greet thee well, thou holly green,
> Welcome, welcome art thou seen,
> With all thy glittering garlands bending,
> As to greet my—quick descending;"

she finished in an altered tone, as she was obliged to spring precipitately down to avoid a fall. "It made a capital conclusion, however, though not quite what I had proposed. Well, gentlemen," as four or five of the boys came up, each bearing a huge holly bush. "Well, gentlemen, you are a sight for sair een."

"With sair fingers, you mean," said Fred; "these bushes scratch like half a dozen wild cats."

"It is in too good a cause for me to pity you," said Beatrice.

"Nor would I accept it if you would," said Fred.

His sister, however, seemed determined on bestowing it whether he would or not. "How your hands are bleeding! Have you any thorns in them? Let me see, I have my penknife."

"Stuff!" was Fred's gracious reply, as he glanced at Alex and Carey.

"But why did you not put on your gloves?" proceeded Henrietta.

"Gloves, nonsense!" said Fred, who never went without them at Rocksand.

"He will take up the gauntlet presently," said Beatrice. "By the bye, Alex, how many pair of gloves have you had or lost in your life?"

"Oh, I always keep a pair for Sundays and for Allon field," said Alex.

"Jessie says she will never let me drive her again without them," said Carey, "but trust me for that; I hate them, they are such girls' things; I tell her then she can't be driven."

Fred could not bear to hear of Carey's driving, a thing which he had not been permitted to attempt, and he hastily broke in: "You have not told the news yet."

"What news?"

"The Euphrosyne is coming home," cried the boys with one voice. "Had we not told you? The Euphrosyne is coming home, and Roger may be here any day!"

"That is something like news," said Queen Bee; "I thought it would only be that the puppies could see, or that Tom's tooth was through. Grandpapa has not heard it?"

"Papa is going up to tell him," said John. "I was going too, only Alex bagged me to carry his holly-bush."

"And so the great 'Rogero' is coming home!" said Beatrice. "How you will learn to talk sea slang! And how happy grandmamma will be, especially if he comes in time for her great affair. Do you hear, Alex? you must practice your steps, for grandmamma is going to give a grand party, Careys and Evanses, and all, on purpose to gratify Fred's great love of dancing."

"I love dancing?" exclaimed Fred, in a tone of astonishment and contempt

"Why, did you not look quite enraptured at breakfast when it was proposed? I expected you every moment to ask the honor of my hand for the first quadrille, but I suppose you leave it for Philip Carey!"

"If it comes at all you must start me, Bee," said Alex, "for I am sure I can't dance with any one but you."

"Let me request it now," said Fred, "though why you

should think I like dancing I cannot imagine! I am sure nothing but your majesty can make it endurable."

"There are compliments to your majesty," cried Henrietta, laughing; "one will not or cannot dance at all without her, the other cannot find it endurable! I long to see which is to be gratified."

"Time will show," said Beatrice; "I shall ponder on their requests, and decide maturely, Greek against Prussian, lover of the dance against hater of the dance."

"I don't love it, I declare," exclaimed Fred.

"I don't mind it, if you dance with me," said Alex.

And Beatrice was in her glory, teasing them both, and feeling herself the object of attention to both.

Flirtation is not a pleasant word, and it is one which we are apt to think applies chiefly to the manners of the girls vain of their personal appearance, and wanting in sense or education. Beatrice would have thought herself infinitely above it; but what else was her love of attention, her delight in playing off her two cousins against each other? Beauty, or the consciousness of beauty, has little to do with it. Henrietta, if ever the matter occurred to her, could not help knowing that she was uncommonly pretty, yet no one could be more free from any tendency to this habit. Beatrice knew equally well that she was plain, but that did not make the least difference; if any, it was rather on the side of vanity, in being able, without a handsome face, so to attract and engross her cousins. It was amusing, gratifying, flattering, to feel her power to play them off, and irritate the little feelings of jealousy which she had detected, and thoughtless as to the right or wrong, she pursued her course.

On reaching the church they found that, as was usual with her, she had brought them before any one was ready. The doors were locked, and they had to wait while Carey and John went to old Martha's to fetch the key. In a few minutes more Mr. Franklin arrived, well pleased to see them ready to fulfill their promise; the west door was opened, and disclosed a huge heap of holly laid up under the tower, ready for use.

The first things the boys did was to go up into the belfry, and out on the top of the tower, and Busy Bee had a great mind to follow them; but she thought it would not be fair to Mr. Franklin, and the wide field upon which she had to work began to alarm her imagination.

Before the boys came down again, she had settled the plan of operations with Henrietta and Mr. Franklin, dragged her holly bushes into the aisle, and brought out her knife and string. They came down declaring that they could be of no use, and they should go away, and Beatrice

made no objection to the departure of Carey and Johnny, who, as she justly observed, would be only in the way; but she insisted on keeping Fred and Alex.

"Look at all those pillars! How are we ever to twine them by ourselves? Look at all those great bushes! How are we to lift them? No, no, indeed, we cannot spare you, Fred. We must have some stronger hands to help us, and you have such a good eye for this sort of thing."

Had Alexander gone, Fred would have found some excuse for following him, rather than he should leave him with young ladies, doing young ladies' work; but as Beatrice well knew, Alex would never withdraw his assistance when she asked Fred's, and she felt secure of them both.

"There, Alex, settle that ladder by the screen, please. Now will you see if there is anything to tie a piece of string to? for it is of no use to make a festoon if we cannot fasten it."

"I can't see anything."

"Here, give me your hand, and I'll look." Up tripped the little Bee, just holding by his hand. "Yes, to be sure there is! Here is a great, rough nail sticking out. Is it firm? Yes, capitally. Now, Alex, make a sailor's knot round it. Help me down first, though—thank you. Fred, will you trim that branch into something like shape. You see how I mean. We must have a long drooping wreath of holly and ivy, to blend with the screen. How tough this ivy is! Thank you—that's it. Well, Mr. Franklin, I hope we shall get on in time."

Mr. Franklin was sure of it; and seeing all actively employed, and himself of little use, he took his leave for the present, hoping that the Misses Langford would not tire themselves.

Angels' work is church decoration—work fit for angels, that is to say; but how pure should be the hands and hearts engaged in it! Its greatness makes it solemn and awful. It is work immediately for the glory of GOD; it is work like that of the children who strewed the palm-branches before the steps of the Redeemer! Who can frame in imagination a more favored and delightful occupation, than that of the four young creatures who were, in very deed, greeting the coming of their LORD with those bright, glistening wreaths with which they were adorning His sanctuary?

Angels' work! but the angels veil their faces and tremble; and we upon earth have still greater cause to tremble and bow down in awful reverence, when we are allowed to approach so near His shrine. And was that spirit of holy fear

—that sole desire for His glory—the chief thought with these young people?

Not that there was what even a severe judge could call irreverence in word or deed; there was no idle laughter, and the conversation was in a tone and a style which showed that they were all well trained in respect for the sanctity of the place. Even in all the helping up and down ladders and steps, in the reaching over for branches, in all the little mishaps and adventures that befell them, their behavior was outwardly perfectly what it ought to have been; and that is no small praise for four young people, under seventeen, left in church alone together for so many hours.

But still Beatrice's great aim was, unconsciously perhaps, to keep the two boys entirely devoted to herself, and to exert her power. Wonderful power it was in reality, which kept them interested in employment so little accordant with their nature; kept them amused without irreverence, and doing good service all the time. But it was a power of which she greatly enjoyed the exercise, and which did nothing to lessen the rivalry between them. As to Henrietta, she was sitting apart on a hassock, very happy, and very busy in arranging the monogram and wreath which she had yesterday proposed. She was almost forgotten by the other three—certainly neglected—but she did not feel it so; she had rather be quiet, for she could not work and talk like Queen Bee; and she liked to think over the numerous verses and hymns that her employment brought to her mind. Uncle Geoffrey's conversation dwelt upon her too; she began to realize his meaning, and she was especially anxious to fulfill his desire, by entreating Fred to beware of temptations to disobedience. Opportunities for private interviews were, however, very rare at Knight Sutton, and she had been looking forward to having him all to herself here, when he must wish to visit his father's grave with her. She was vexed for a moment that his first attention was not given to it; but she knew that his first thought was there, and boys never showed what was uppermost in their minds to any one but their sisters. She should have him by and by, and the present was full of tranquil enjoyment.

If Henrietta had been free from blame in coming to Knight Sutton at all, or in her way of leaving the house this morning, there would have been little or no drawback to our pleasure in contemplating her.

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Queen Bee, as the last reverberation of the single stroke of the deep-toned clock fell quivering on her ear. "I thought you would have given us at least eleven more."

"What a quantity remains to be done!" sighed Henrietta, laying down the wreath which she had just completed. "Your work looks beautiful, Queenie, but how shall we ever finish?"

"A short winter's day, too," said Beatrice. "One thing is certain—that we can't go home to luncheon."

"What will grandmamma think of that?" said Henrietta doubtfully. "Will she like it?"

Beatrice could have answered, "Not at all;" but she said, "Oh never mind, it can't be helped; we should be late even if we were to set off now, and besides we might be caught and stopped."

"Oh, that would be worse than anything," said Henrietta, quite convinced.

"So you mean to starve," said Alex.

"See what slaves men are to creature comforts," said Beatrice; "what do you say, Henrietta?"

"I had much rather stay here," said Henrietta; "I want nothing."

"Much better fun to go without," said Fred, who had not often enough missed a regular meal not to think doing so an honor and a joke.

"I'll tell you what will do best of all!" cried Queen Bee. "You go to Dame Reid's, and buy us sixpenny-worth of the gingerbread papa calls the extreme of luxury, and we will eat it on the old men's bench in the porch."

"Oho! her majesty is descending to creature comforts," said Alex. "I thought she would soon come down to other mortals."

"Only to gratify her famishing subjects," said Beatrice, "you disloyal vassal, you! Fred is worth a dozen of you. Come, make haste. She is sure to have a fresh stock, for she always has a great baking when Mr. Geoffrey is coming."

"For his private eating?" said Fred.

"He likes it pretty well, certainly; and he seldom goes through the village without making considerable purchases for the benefit of the children in his path, who take care to be not a few. I found little Jenny Woods made small distinction between Mr. Geoffrey and Mr. Ginger. But come, Alex, why are not you off?"

"Because I don't happen to have a sixpence," said Alex, with an honest openness overcoming his desire to add "in my pocket." It cost him an effort; for at school, where each slight advantage was noted, and comparisons perpetually made, Fred's superior wealth and larger allowance had secured him the adherence of some; and though he either knew it not, or despised such mammon worship, his

rival was sufficiently awake to it to be uncomfortable in acknowledging his poverty.

"Every one is poor at the end of the half," said Fred, tossing up his purse and catching it again, so as to demonstrate its lightness. "Here is a sixpence, though, at her majesty's service."

"And do you think she would take your last sixpence, you honor to loyalty?" said Beatrice, feeling in her pocket. "We are not fallen quite so low. But alas! the royal exchequer is, as I now remember, locked up in my desk at home."

"And my purse is in my work-box," said Henrietta.

"So, Fred, I must be beholden to you for the present," said Beatrice, "if it won't quite break you down."

"There are more where that came from," said Fred, with a careless air. "Come along, Alex."

Away they went. "That is unlucky," soliloquized Queen Bee; "if I could have sent Alex alone, it would have been all right, and he would have come back again; but now one will carry away the other, and we shall see them no more."

"No, no, that would be rather too bad," said Henrietta. "I am sure Fred will behave better."

"Mark what I say," said Beatrice. "I know how it will be; a dog or a gun is what a boy cannot for a moment withstand, and if we see them again 'twill be a nine days' wonder. But come, we must to the work; I want to look at your wreath."

She did not, however, work quite as cheerily as before, and lost much time in running backward and forward to peep out at the door, and in protesting that she was neither surprised nor annoyed at the faithlessness of her envoys. At last a droll little frightened knock was heard at the door. Beatrice went to open it, and a whitey-brown paper parcel was held out to her by a boy in a green canvas round frock, and a pair of round, hard, red, solid-looking cheeks; no other than Dame Reid's grandson.

"Thank you," said she. "Did Master Alexander give you this?"

"Ay."

"Thank you, that's right!" and away he went.

"You see," said Queen Bee, holding up the parcel to Henrietta, who came out to the porch. "Let us look. Oh, they have vouchsafed a note!" and she took out a crumpled envelope, directed in Aunt Mary's handwriting to Fred, on the back of which Alex had written, "Dear B., we beg pardon, but Carey and Dick are going up to Andrews' about his terrier.—A. L." "Very cool, certainly,"

said Beatrice, laughing, but still with a little pique. "What a life I will lead them!"

"Well, you were a true prophet," said Henrietta, "and after all it does not much signify. They have done all the work that is out of reach; but still I thought Fred would have behaved better."

"You have yet to learn the difference between Fred with you or with me, and Fred with his own congeners," said Beatrice; "you don't know half the phases of boy nature."

Henrietta sighed; for Fred had certainly not been quite what she expected him to-day. Not because he had appeared to forget her, for that was nothing—that was only appearance, and her love was too healthy and true even to feel it neglect; but he had forgotten his father's grave. He was now neglecting the church; and far from its consoling her to hear that it was the way with all boys when they came together, it gave her one moment's doubt whether they were not happier, when they were all in all to each other at Rocksand.

It was but for one instant that she felt this impression; the next it had passed away, and she was sharing the gingerbread with her cousin, and smiling at the great admiration in which it seemed to be held by the natives of Knight Sutton. They took a short walk up and down the churchyard while eating it, and then returned to their occupation, well pleased, on re-entering, to see how much show they had made already. They worked together very happily; indeed, now that all thought of her squires was quite out of her head, Beatrice worked much more in earnest and in the right kind of frame; something more of the true spirit of this service came over her, and she really possessed some of that temper of devotion which she fancied had been with her the whole day.

It was a beautiful thing when Henrietta raised her face, as she was kneeling by the font, and her clear sweet voice began at first in a low timid note, but gradually growing fuller and stronger:

> "Hark! the herald angels sing
> Glory to the new-born King,
> Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
> God and sinners reconciled."

Beatrice took up the strain at the first line, and sweetly did their tones echo through the building; while their hearts swelled with delight and thankfulness for the "good tidings of great joy." Another and another Christian hymn was raised, and never were carols sung by happier voices; and the decorations proceeded all the better and more suitably beneath their influence. They scarcely knew how time passed away, till Henrietta, turning round, was

amazed to see Uncle Geoffrey standing just within the door watching them.

"Beautiful!" said he, as she suddenly ceased, in some confusion; "your work is beautiful! I came here prepared to scold you a little, but I don't think I can. Who made that wreath and monogram?"

"She did, of course, papa," said Beatrice, pointing to her cousin. "Who else could?"

"It is a very successful arrangement," said Uncle Geoffrey, moving about to find the spot for obtaining the best view. "It is an arrangement to suggest so much."

Henrietta came to the place where he stood, and for the first time perceived the full effect of her work. It was placed in front of the altar, the dark crimson covering of which relieved the shining leaves and scarlet berries of the holly. The three letters, *i h c*, were in the center, formed of small sprays fastened in the required shape; and around them was a large circle of holly, plaited and twined together, the many-pointed leaves standing out in every direction in their peculiar stiff gracefulness.

"I see it now!" said she, in a low voice full of awe. "Uncle, I did not mean to make it so!"

"How?" he asked.

"It is like Good Friday!" said she, as the resemblance to the crown of thorns struck her more and more strongly.

"Well, why not, my dear?" said her uncle, as she shrunk closer to him in a sort of alarm. "Would Christmas be worth observing if it were not for Good Friday?"

"Yes, it is right, uncle; but somehow it is melancholy."

"Where are those verses that say—let me see:

"'And still Thy Church's faith
Shall link, in all her prayers and praise,
Thy glory with Thy death.'

So you see, Henrietta, you have been guided to do quite right."

Henrietta gave a little sigh, but did not answer; and Beatrice said, "It is a very odd thing, whenever any work of art—or, what shall I call it?—is well done, it is apt to have so much more in it than the author intended. It is so in poetry, painting and everything else."

"There is, perhaps, more meaning than we understand when we talk of the spirit in which a thing is done," said her father: "But have you much more to do? Those columns look very well."

"Oh, are you come to help us, papa?"

"I came chiefly because grandmamma was a good deal concerned at your not coming home to luncheon. You must not be out the whole morning again just at present. I have some sandwiches in my pocket for you."

Beatrice explained how they had been fed, and her papa said, "Very well, we will find some one who will be glad of them; but mind, do not make her think you unsociable again. Do you hear and heed?"

It was that sort of tone which, while perfectly kind and gentle shows that it belongs to a man who will be obeyed, and ready compliance was promised. He proceeded to give his very valuable aid at once in taste and execution, the adornment prospered greatly, and when Mr. Franklin came in, his surprise and delight were excited by the beauty which had grown up in his absence. The long, drooping, massive wreaths of evergreen at the east end, centering in the crown and letters; the spiral festoons round the pillars; the sprays in every niche; the tower of holly over the font—all were more beautiful both together and singly, than he had even imagined, and he was profuse in admiration and thanks.

The work was done; and the two Misses Langford, after one well-satisfied survey from the door, bent their steps homeward, looking forward to the pleasure with which grandpapa and Aunt Mary would see it to-morrow. As they went in the deepening twilight, the whole village seemed vocal; children's voices, shrill and tuneless near, but softened by distance, were ringing out here, there, and everywhere, with—

"As shepherds watched their flocks by night."

And again, as they walked on, the sound from another band of little voices was brought on the still, frosty wind—

"Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind."

Imperfect rhymes, bad voices, no time observed; but how joyous—how really Christmas-like—how well it suited the soft half-light, the last pale shine of sunset lingering in the southwest! the large, solemn stars that one by one appeared! How Uncle Geoffrey caught up the lines and sung them over to himself! How light and free Beatrice walked! —and how the quiet, happy tears would rise in Henrietta's eyes!

The singing in the drawing-room that evening, far superior as it was, with Henrietta, Beatrice, Frederick, and even Aunt Mary's beautiful voice, was not equal in enjoyment to that. Was it because Beatrice was teasing Fred all the time about his defection? The church singers came up to the Hall, and the drawing-room door was set open for the party to listen to them; grandpapa and Uncle Geoffrey went out to have a talk with them, and so passed the space till tea-time; to say nothing of the many little troops of young small voices outside the windows, to

whom Mrs. Langford's plum buns, and Mr. Geoffrey's sixpences, were a very enjoyable part of the Christmas festivities.

CHAPTER VII.

THE double feast of Sunday and Christmas Day dawned upon Henrietta with many anxieties for her mother, to whom the first going to church must be so great a trial. Would that she could, as of old, be at her side the whole day! but this privilege, unrecked of at Rocksand, was no longer hers. She had to walk to church with grandmamma and the rest of the party, while Mrs. Frederick Langford was driven in the open carriage by old Mr. Langford, and she was obliged to comfort herself with recollecting that no companion ever suited her better than grandpapa. It was a sight to be remembered when she came into church, leaning upon his arm, her sweet expression of peace and resignation making her even more lovely than when last she entered there—her face in all its early bloom of youthful beauty, and radiant with innocent happiness.

But Henrietta knew not how to appreciate that "peace which passeth all understanding;" and all that she saw was the glistening of tears in her eyes, and the heaving of her bosom, as she knelt down in her place; and she thought that if she had calculated all that she would have to go through, and all her own anxieties for her, she should never have urged their removal. She viewed it, however, as a matter of expediency rather than of duty, and her feelings were not in the only right and wholesome channel. As on the former occasion, Knight Sutton Church seemed to her more full of her father's presence than of any other, so now, throughout the service, she was chiefly occupied with watching her mother; and entirely by the force of her own imagination, she contrived to work herself into a state of nervous apprehension, only equaled by her mamma's own anxieties for Fred. Neither she nor any of her young cousins were yet confirmed, so they all left the church together. What would she not have given to be able to talk her fears over with either Frederick or Beatrice, and be assured by them that her mamma had borne it very well, and would not suffer from it. But though neither of them was indifferent or unfeeling, there was not much likelihood of sympathy from them just at present. Beatrice had always been sure that Aunt Mary would behave like an angel; and when Fred saw that his mother looked tranquil, and showed no symptoms of agitation, he dismissed anxiety from his mind, and never even guessed at his sister's alarms.

Nor in reality had he many thoughts for his sister of any kind; for he was, as usual, engrossed with Queen Bee, criticising the decorations which had been completed in his absence, and, together with Alex, replying to the scolding with which she visited their desertion.

Nothing could have been more eminently successful than the decorations, which looked to still greater advantage in the brightness of the morning sun than in the dimness of the evening twilight; and many were the compliments which the two young ladies received upon their handiwork. The old women had "never seen nothing like it," the school children whispered to each other: "How pretty!" Uncle Geoffrey and Mr. Franklin admired even more than before; grandpapa and Aunt Mary were delighted; grandmamma herself allowed it was much better than she had expected; and Jessie Carey, by way of climax, said it "was like magic."

It was a very different Sunday from those to which Henrietta had been accustomed, in the complete quiet and retirement of Rocksand. The Hall was so far from the church that there was but just time to get back in time for evening service. After which, according to a practice of which she had often heard her mamma speak with many agreeable reminiscences, the Langford family almost always went in a body on a progress to the farmyard, to visit the fatting oxen and see the cows milked.

Mrs. Roger Langford was at home with little Tom, and Mrs. Frederick Langford was glad to seek the tranquillity and repose of her own apartment; but all the rest went in procession, greatly to the amusement of Fred and Henrietta, to the large barn-like building, where a narrow path led them along the front of the stalls of the gentle-looking, sweet-breathed cows, and the huge white-horned oxen.

Uncle Roger (as always happened) monopolized his brother, and kept him estimating the weight of the great Devon ox, which was next for execution. Grandmamma was escorting Charlie and Arthur (whom their grandfather was wont to call "penultimus and antepenultimus") helping them to feed the cows with turnips, and guarding them from going behind their heels. Henrietta was extremely happy, for grandpapa himself was doing the honors for her, and instructing her in the difference between a Guernsey cow and a short-horn; and so was Alexander, for he had Queen Bee all to himself, in a remote corner of the cow-house, rubbing old spotted Nancy's curly brow, catching at her polished, black-tipped horn, and listening to his hopes and fears for the next half year. Not so Frederick, as he stood at the door with Jessie Carey, who, having no love for the cow-house, especially when in her best silk,

though always ready to take care of the children there, was very glad to secure a companion outside, especially one so handsome, so much more polished than any of her cousins, and so well able to reply to her small talk. Little did she guess how far off he wished her, or how he longed to be listening to his uncles, talking to Beatrice, sticking holly into the cows' halters with John and Richard, scrambling into the hay-loft with Carey and William—anywhere, rather than to be liable to the imputation of being too fine a gentleman to enter a cow-house.

This accusation never entered the head of any one but himself; but still an attack was in store for him. After a few words to Martin the cowman, and paying their respects to the pigs, the party left the farm-yard, and the inhabitants of Sutton Leigh took the path to their own abode, while Beatrice turned round to her cousin, saying: "Well, Fred, I congratulate you on your politeness! How well you endured being victimized!"

"I victimized! How do you know I was not enchanted?"

"Nay, you can't deceive me while you have a transparent face. Trust me for finding out whether you are bored or not. Besides, I would not pay so bad a compliment to your taste as to think otherwise."

"How do you know I was not exercising the taste of Rubens himself? I was actually admiring you all, and thinking how like it all was to that great print from one of his pictures; the building with its dark, gloomy roof, and open sides, the twilight, the solitary, dispersed snow-flakes, the haze of dust, the sleek cattle, and their long white horns."

"Quite poetical," said Queen Bee, in a short, dry, satirical manner. "How charmed Jessie must have been!"

"Why?" said Fred, rather provoked.

"Such masterly eyes are not common among our young gentlemen. You will be quite her phenix: and how much 'Thomson's Seasons' you will have to hear! I dare say you have had it already:

"'Now, shepherds, to your helpless charge be kind!'"

"Well, very good advice, too," said Fred.

"I hate and detest Thomson," said Beatrice; "above all, for travestying Ruth into 'the lovely young Lavinia;' so whenever Jessie treated me to any of her quotations, I criticised him without mercy, and at last I said, by great good luck, that the only use of him was to serve as an imposition for young ladies at second-rate boarding-schools. It was a capital hit, but Alex found out that it was the way she learned so much of him, and since that time I

have heard no more of 'Jemmy Thomson! Jemmy Thomson! O!' "

The laughter which followed this speech had a tone in it which reaching Mr. Geoffrey Langford, who was walking a little in front with his mother, made him suspect that the young people were getting into such spirits as were not quite Sunday-like; and, turning round, he asked them some trifling question, which made him a party to the conversation, and brought it back to a quieter though not less merry tone.

Dinner was at five, and Henrietta was dressed so late that Queen Bee had to come up to summon her, and bring her down after every one was in the dining-room—an *entree* all the more formidable because Mr. Franklin was dining there, as well as Uncle Roger and Alexander.

Thanks in some degree to her own dawdling, she had been in a hurry the whole day, and longed for a quiet evening; but here it seemed to her, as with the best intentions it usually is in a large party, that, but for the laying aside of needlework, of secular books and secular music, it might as well have been any other day of the week.

Her mamma was very tired, and went to bed before tea, the gentlemen had a long talk over the fire, the boys and Beatrice laughed and talked, and she helped her grandmamma to hand about the tea, answered her questions about her mother's health and habits, and heard a good deal that interested her, but still she could not feel as if it were Sunday. At Rocksand she used to sit for many a pleasant hour, either in the darkening summer twilight, or the bright red light of the winter fire, repeating or singing hymns, and enjoying the most delightful talks that the whole week had to offer, and now she greatly missed the conversation that would have "set this strange week to rights in her head," as she said to herself.

She thought over it a good deal whilst Bennet was brushing her hair at night, feeling as if it had been a week-day, and as if it would be as difficult to begin a new, fresh week on Monday morning, as it would a new day after sitting up a whole night. How far this was occasioned by Knight Sutton habits, and how far it was her own fault, was not what she asked herself, though she sat up for a long time musing on the change in her way of life, and scarcely able to believe that it was only last Sunday that she had been sitting with her mother over their fire at Rocksand. Enough had happened for a whole month. Her darling project was fulfilled; the airy castle of former days had become a substance, and she was inhabiting it; and was she really so very much happier? There she went into a

reverie—but—but musing is not meditating, nor vague dreamings wholesome reflections; she went on sitting there, chiefly for want of energy to move, till the fire burned low, the clock struck twelve, and Mrs. Frederick Langford exclaimed, in a sleepy voice, "My dear, are you gone to sleep there?"

CHAPTER VIII.

BREAKFAST was nearly over on Monday morning, when a whole party of the Sutton Leigh boys entered with the intelligence that the great pond in Knight's Portion was quite frozen over, and that skating might begin without loss of time.

"You are coming, are you not, Bee?" said Alex, leaning over the back of her chair.

"Oh, yes," said she, nearly whispering, "only take care. It is taboo there"—and she made a sign with her head toward Mrs. Langford, "and don't frighten Aunt Mary about Fred. Oh, it is too late, Carey's doing the deed as fast as he can."

Carey was asking Fred whether he had ever skated, or could skate, and Fred was giving an account of his exploits in that line at school, hoping it might prove to his mother that he might be trusted to take care of himself since he had dared the danger before. In vain; the alarmed expression had come over her face as she asked Alexander whether his father had looked at the ice.

"No," said Alex, "but it is perfectly safe. I tried it this morning, and it is as firm as this marble chimney-piece."

"He is pretty well to be trusted," said his grandfather, "more especially as it would be difficult to get drowned there."

"I would give a shilling to any one who could drown himself there," said Alex.

"The traveling man did," exclaimed at once Carey, John, and Richard.

"Don't they come in just like the Greek chorus?" said Beatrice, in a whisper to Fred, who gave a little laugh, but was too anxious to attend to her.

"I thought he was drowned in the river," said Alex.

"No, it was in the deep pool under the weeping willow, where the duckweed grows so rank in summer," said Carey.

Uncle Geoffrey laughed. "I am sorry to interfere with your romantic embellishments, Carey, or with the credit of your beloved pond, since you are determined not to leave it behindhand with its neighbors."

"I always thought it was there," said the boy.

"And thought wrong; the poor man was found in the river two miles off."

"I always heard it was at Knight's Pool," repeated Carey.

"I do not know what you may have heard," said Uncle Geoffrey; "but as it happened a good while before you were born, I think you had better not argue the point."

"Grandpapa," persisted Carey, "was it not in Knight's Pool?"

"Certainly not," was the answer dryly given.

"Well," continued Carey, "I am sure you might drown yourself there."

"Rather than own yourself mistaken," said Uncle Geoffrey.

"Carey, Carey, I hate contradiction," said grandmamma, rising and rustling past where he stood with a most absurd, dogged, unconvinced face. "Take your arm off the mantel-piece, let that china cup alone, and stand like a gentleman. Do!"

"All in vain!" said Beatrice. "To the end of his life he will maintain that Knight's Pool drowned the traveling man!"

"Well, never mind," said John, impatiently, "are we coming to skate this morning, or are we not?"

"I really wish," said Aunt Mary, as if she could not help it, "without distrusting either old Knight's Pool or your judgment, Alexander, that you would ask some one to look at it."

"I should like just to run down and see the fun," said Uncle Geoffrey, thus setting all parties at rest for the moment. The two girls ran joyfully up to put on their bonnets, as Henrietta wished to see, Beatrice to join in, the sport. At that instant Mrs. Langford asked her son Geoffrey to remove some obstacle which hindered the comfortable shutting of the door, and though a servant might just as well have done it, he readily complied, according to his constant habit of making all else give way to her, replying to the discomfited looks of the boys, "I shall be ready by the time the young ladies come down."

So he was, long before Henrietta was ready, and just as she and Beatrice appeared on the stairs, Atkins was carrying across the hall what the boys looked at with glances of dismay, namely, the post-bag. Knight Sutton, being small and remote, did not possess a post-office, but a messenger came from Allonfield for the letters on every day except Sunday, and returned again in the space of an hour. A very inconvenient arrangement, as every one had said for

the last twenty years, and might probably say for twenty years more.

As usual, more than half the contents were for G. Langford, Esq., and Fred's face grew longer and longer as he saw the closely-written business-like sheets.

"Fred, my poor fellow," said his uncle, looking up, "I am sorry for you, but one or two must be answered by this day's post. I will not be longer than I can help."

"Then do let us come on," exclaimed the chorus.

"Come Queenie," added Alex.

She delayed, however, saying, "Can I do any good, papa?"

"Thank you, let me see. I do not like to stop you, but it would save time if you could just copy a letter."

"Oh, thank you, pray let me," said Beatrice, delighted. "Go on, Henrietta, I shall soon come."

Henrietta would have waited, but she saw a chance of speaking to her brother, which she did not like to lose.

Her mother had taken advantage of the various conversations going on in the hall, to draw her son aside, saying, "Freddy, I believe you think me very troublesome, but do let me entreat of you not to venture on the ice till one of your uncles has said it is safe."

"Uncle Roger trusts Alex," said Fred.

"Yes, but he lets all those boys take their chance, and a number of you together are likely to be careless, and I know there used to be dangerous places in that pond. I will not detain you, my dear," added she, as the others were preparing to start, "only I beg you will not attempt to skate till your uncle comes."

"Very well," said Frederick, in a tone of as much annoyance as ever he showed his mother, and with little suspicion how much it cost her not to set her mind at rest by exacting a promise from him. This she had resolutely forborne to do in cases like the present, from his earliest days, and she had her reward in the implicit reliance she could place on his word when once given. And now, sighing that it had not been voluntarily offered, she went to her sofa, to struggle and reason in vain with her fears, and start at each approaching step, lest it should bring the tidings of some fatal accident, all the time blaming herself for the entreaties which might, as she dreaded, place him in peril of disobedience.

In a few moments Mr. Geoffrey Langford was sitting in the great red leathern chair in the study, writing as fast as his fingers would move, apparently without a moment for thought, though he might have said, like the great painter, that what seemed the work of half an hour, was in fact the labor of years. His daughter, her bonnet by her side, sat op-

posite to him, writing with almost equal rapidity, and supremely happy, for to the credit of our little Queen Bee let it be spoken, that no talk with Henrietta, no walk with grandpapa, no new exciting tale, no, not even a flirtation with Fred and Alex, one or both, was equal in her estimation to the pleasure and honor of helping papa, even though it was copying a dry legal opinion, instead of gliding about on the smooth hard ice, in the bright winter morning's sunshine.

The two pens maintained a duet of diligent scratching for some twenty or five-and-twenty minutes without intermission, but at last Beatrice looked up, and, without speaking, held up the sheet.

"Already? Thank you, my little clerk, I could think it was mamma. Now, then, off to the skating. My compliments to Fred, and tell him I feel for him, and will not keep him waiting longer than I can avoid;" and muttering a resumption of his last sentence, on went the lawyer's indefatigable pen; and away flew the merry little Busy Bee, bounding off with her droll, tripping, elastic, short-stepped run, which suited so well with her little alert figure, and her dress, a small, plain, black velvet bonnet, a tight black velvet "jacket," as she called it, and a brown silk dress, with narrow yellow stripes—chosen chiefly in joke, because it was the color of a bee—not a bit of superfluous shawl, bow, or ribbon about her, but all close and compact, fit for the diversion which she was eager to enjoy. The only girl among so many boys, she had learned to share in many of their sports, and one of the prime favorites was skating, a diversion which owes as much of its charm to the caprices of its patron, Jack Frost, as to the degree of skill which it requires.

She arrived at the stile leading to "Knight's Portion," as it was called, and a very barren portion must the poor knight have possessed if it was all his property. It was a sloping chalky field, or rather corner of a down, covered with very short grass and thistles, which defied all the attacks of Uncle Roger and his sheep. On one side was a sort of precipice, where the chalk had been dug away, and a rather extensive old chalk-pit formed a tolerable pond, by the assistance of the ditch at the foot of the hedge. On the glassy surface already marked by many a sharply-traced circular line, the Sutton Leigh boys were careering, the younger ones with those extraordinary bends, twists, and contortions to which the unskillful are driven in order to preserve their balance. Frederick and Henrietta stood on the brink, neither of them looking particularly cheerful; but both turned gladly at the sight of the Busy Bee, and came to meet her with eager inquiries for her papa.

She was a very welcome sight to both, especially Henrietta, who had from the first felt almost out of place alone with all those boys, and who hoped that she would be some comfort to poor Fred, who had been entertaining her with every variety of grumbling for the last half hour, and perversely refusing to walk out of sight of the forbidden pleasure, or to talk of anything else. Such a conversation, as she was wishing for, was impossible, whilst he was constantly calling out to the others, and exclaiming at their adventures, and in the intervals lamenting his own hard fate, scolding her for her slowness in dressing, which had occasioned the delay, and magnifying the loss of his pleasure, perhaps in a sort of secret hope that the temptation would so far increase as to form in his eyes an excuse for yielding to it. Seldom had he shown himself so unamiable toward her, and with great relief and satisfaction she beheld her cousin descending the steep, slippery path from the height above, and while the cloud began to lighten on his brow, she thought to herself, "It will be all right now, he is always happy with Busy Bee!"

So he might have been had Beatrice been sufficiently unselfish for once to use her influence in the right direction, and surrender an amusement for the sake of another; but to give up or defer such a pleasure as skating with Alex never entered her mind, though a moment's reflection might have shown her how much more annoying the privation would be rendered by the sight of a girl fearlessly enjoying the sport from which he was debarred. It would, perhaps, be judging too hardly to reckon against her as a fault that her grandmamma could not bear to hear of anything so "boyish" and had long ago entreated her to be more like a young lady. There was no positive order in this case, and her papa and mamma did not object. So she eagerly answered Alexander's summons, fastened on her skates, and soon was gliding merrily on the surface of the Knight's Pool, while her cousins watched her dexterity with surprise and interest; but soon Fred once more grew gloomy, sighed, groaned, looked at his watch, and recommenced his complaints. At first she had occupation enough in attending to her own security to bestow any attention on other things, but in less than a quarter of an hour, she began to feel at her ease, and her spirits rising to the pitch where consideration is lost, she "could not help," in her own phrase, laughing at the disconsolate Fred.

"How wobegone he looks!" said she, as she whisked past, "but never mind, Fred, the post must go some time or other."

"It must be gone," said Fred. "I am sure we have been here above an hour!"

"Henrietta looks blue with cold, like an old hen obliged to follow her ducklings to the water!" observed Beatrice, again gliding near, and in the midst of her next circular sweep she chanted:

> "Although their feet are pointed, and my feet are round,
> Pray, is that any reason why I should be drowned?"

It was a great aggravation of Fred's calamities to be obliged to laugh, nor were matters mended by the sight of the party now advancing from the house, Jessie Carey, with three of the lesser boys.

"What news of Uncle Geoffrey?"

"I did not see him," said Jessie; "I think he was in the study, Uncle Roger went to him there."

"No hope then?" muttered the unfortunate Fred.

"Can't you skate, Fred?" asked little Arthur, with a certain most provoking face of wonder and curiosity.

"Presently," said Fred.

"He must not," cried Richard, in a tone which Fred thought malicious, though it was only rude.

"Must not?" and Arthur looked up in amazement to the boy so much taller than his three brothers, creatures in his eyes privileged to do what they pleased.

"His mamma won't let him," was Dick's polite answer. Fred could have knocked him down with the greatest satisfaction, but in the first place he was out of reach, in the second the young ladies were present, in the third, he was a little boy, and a stupid one, and Fred had temper enough left to see that there would be nothing gained by quarreling with him, so contenting himself with a secret but most ardent wish that he had him as his fag at school, he turned to Jessie, and asked her what she thought of the weather, if the white frost would bring rain, etc.

Jessie thought the morning too bright not to be doubtful, and the hoar frost was so very thick and white that it was not likely to continue much longer.

"How beautiful these delicate white crests are to every thorn in the hedge!" said Henrietta; "and look, these pieces of chalk are almost cased in glass."

"Oh, I do love such a sight!" said Jessie. "Here is a beautiful bit of stick crusted over."

"It is a perfect little Giant's Causeway," said Henrietta; "do look at these lovely little columns, Fred."

"Ah!" said Jessie,

> "Myriads of little salts, or hook'd or shaped
> Like double wedges——"

She thought Beatrice safe out of hearing, but that very

moment by she came, borne swiftly along, and catching the cadence of that one line, looked archly at Fred, and shaped with her lips rather than uttered—

"O, Jemmy Thomson! Jemmy Thomson, O!"

It filled up the measure. That Beatrice, Alexander and chorus should be making him a laughing-stock, and him pinned to Miss Carey's side, was more than he could endure. He had made up his mind that Uncle Geoffrey was not coming at all, his last feeble hold of patience and obedience gave way, and he exclaimed, "Well, I sha'n't wait any longer, it is not of the least use."

"O, Fred, consider!" said his sister.

"That's right, Freddy," shouted Carey, "he'll not come now, I'll answer for it."

"You know he promised he would," pleaded Henrietta.

"Uncle Roger has got hold of him, and he is as bad as the old man of the sea," said Fred; "the post has been gone this half hour, and I shall not wait any longer."

"Think of mamma."

"How can you talk such nonsense, Henrietta," exclaimed Fred, impatiently, "do you think that I am so awfully heavy that the ice that bears them must needs break with me?"

"I do not suppose there is any danger," said Henrietta, "but for the sake of poor mamma's entreaties!"

"Do you think I am going to be kept in leading-strings all the rest of my life?" said Fred, obliged to work himself into a passion in order to silence his sister and his conscience. "I have submitted to such absurd nonsense a great deal too long already, I will not be made a fool of in the sight of everybody; so here goes!"

And breaking away from her detaining arm, he ran down to the verge of the pond, and claimed the skates which he had lent to John. Henrietta turned away, her eyes full of tears.

"Never mind, Henrietta," shouted the good-natured Alexander. "I'll engage to fish him out if he goes in."

"It is as likely I may fish you out, Mr. Alex," returned Fred, slightly affronted.

"Or more likely still there will be no fishing in the case," said the naughty little siren, who felt all the time a secret satisfaction in the consciousness that it was she who had made the temptation irresistible, then adding, to pacify Henrietta and her own feelings of compunction, "Aunt Mary must be satisfied when she hears with what exemplary patience he waited till papa was past hope, and the pond past fear."

Whether Alex smiled at the words "past fear," or whether Fred only thought he did is uncertain; the effect

was that he exclaimed, "I only wish there was a place in this pond that you did not like to skate over, Alex."

"Well, there is one," said Alex, laughing, "where Carey drowns the traveling man—there is a spring there, and the ice is never so firm, so you may try——"

"Don't, Fred—I beg you won't!" cried Beatrice.

"O, Fred, Fred, think, think if anything should happen!" implored Henrietta.

"I sha'n't look, I can't bear it," exclaimed Jessie, turning away.

Fred without listening skated triumphantly toward the hedge and across the perilous part, and fortunately it was without disaster. In the midst of the shout of applause with which the chorus celebrated his achievement, a gate in the hedge suddenly opened, and the two uncles stood before them. The first thing Uncle Geoffrey did was to take a short run, and slide right across the middle of the pond, while Uncle Roger stood by laughing and saying, "Well done, Geoffrey, you are not quite so heavy as I am."

Uncle Geoffrey reaching the opposite side caught up little Charley by the arms and whirled him round in the air, then shouted in a voice that had all the glee and blithe exultation of a boy just released from school, "I hereby certify to all whom it may concern, the pond is franked. Where's Fred?"

Fred wished himself anywhere else, and so did Henrietta. Even Queen Bee's complacency gave way before her father, and it was only Alexander who had spirit to answer, "We thought you were not coming at all."

"Indeed!" said Uncle Geoffrey; and little Willy exclaimed, "Why, Alex, Uncle Geoffrey always comes when he promises," a truth to which every one gave a mental assent.

Without taking the smallest notice of Frederick by word or look, Uncle Geoffrey proceeded to join the other boys, to the great increase of their merriment, instructing them in making figures of eight, and in all the other mysteries of the skating art, which they could scarcely enjoy more than he seemed to do. Henrietta, cold and unhappy, grieved at her brother's conduct, and still more grieved at the displeasure of her uncle, wished to return to the house, yet could not make up her mind to do so, for fear of her mamma's asking about Fred; and whilst she was still doubting and hesitating, the church bells began to ring, reminding her of the saint's day service, one of the delights of Knight Sutton to which she had so long looked forward. Yet here was another disappointment. The uncles and the two girls immediately prepared to go. Jessie said she must take Arthur and Charley home, and set off. The boys

could do as they pleased, and Willy holding Uncle Geoffrey's hand was going with him, but the rest continued their sport, and among them Fred. He had never disobeyed a church bell before, and had rather not have done so now, but as he saw none of his male companions setting off, he fancied that to attend a week-day service in the holidays might be reckoned a girlish proceeding, imagined his cousins laughing at him as soon as his back was turned, and guessed from Uncle Geoffrey's grave looks that he might be taken to task when no longer protected by the presence of the rest.

He therefore replied with a gruff, short "No," to his sister's anxious question whether he was not coming, and flourished away to the other end of the pond, but a few seconds after he was not a little surprised and vexed at finding himself mistaken after all—at least so far as regarded Alex, who had been only going on with his sport to the last moment, and now, taking off his skates, vaulted over the gate, and ran at full speed after the rest of the party, overtaking them before they reached the village.

Henrietta was sadly disappointed when, looking round at the sound of footsteps, she saw him instead of her brother. His refusal to go to church grieved her more than his disobedience, on which she did not in general look with sufficient seriousness, and for which in the present case there were many extenuating circumstances, which she longed to plead to Uncle Geoffrey, who would, she thought, relax in his severity toward her poor Fred, if he knew how long he had waited, and how much he had been teased. This, however, she could not tell him without complaining of his daughter, and in fact it was an additional pain that Queen Bee should have used all her powerful influence in the wrong direction.

It was impossible to be long vexed with the little Busy Bee, even in such circumstances as these, especially when she came up to her, put her arm into hers, and looked into her face with all the sweetness that could sometimes reside in those brown features of hers, saying, "My poor Henrietta, I am afraid we have been putting you to torture all this time, but you know that it is quite nonsense to be afraid of anything happening."

"Oh, yes, I know that, but really, Queenie, you should not have persuaded him."

"I? Well, I believe it was rather naughty of me to laugh at him, for persuade him I did not, but if you had but seen him in the point I did, and known how absurd you two poor disconsolate creatures looked, you would not have been able to help it. And how was I to know that he would go into the only dangerous place he could find, just

by way of bravado? I could have beaten myself when I saw that, but it's all safe, and no harm done."

"There is your papa displeased with him."

"Oh, I will settle that; I will tell him it was half of it my fault, and beg him to say nothing about it. And as for Fred, I should like to make a charade of foolhardy, with a personal application. Did you ever act a charade, Henrietta?"

"Never; I scarcely know what it is."

"Oh, charming, charming! What rare fun we will have. I wish I had not told you of foolhardy, for now we can't have that, but this evening, oh, this evening, I am no Queen Bee if you do not see what will amaze you! Alex! Alex! Where is the boy? I must speak to you this instant!"

Pouncing upon Alexander, she drew him a little behind the others, and was presently engaged in an eager, low-voiced conference, apparently persuading him to something much against his inclination, but Henrietta was not sufficiently happy to bestow much curiosity on the subject. All her thoughts were with Fred, and she had not long been in church before all her mother's fears seemed to have passed to her. Her mother had recovered her serenity, and was able to trust her boy in the hands of his Heavenly Father, while Henrietta, haunted by the remembrance of many a moral tale, was tormenting herself with the expectation of retribution, and dwelling on a fancied figure of her brother lifted senseless out of the water, with closed eyes and dripping hair.

CHAPTER IX.

WITH all her faults, Queen Bee was a good-natured, generous little thing, and it was not what every one would have done, when, as soon as she returned from church, she followed her father to the study, saying: "Papa, you must not be displeased with Fred, for he was very much plagued, and he only had just begun when you came."

"The other boys had been teasing him?"

"Dick had been laughing at him, saying his mamma would not let him go on the ice, and that, you know, was past all bearing. And honestly, it was my fault too; I laughed, not at that joke, of course, for it was only worthy of Dick himself, but at poor Fred's own disconsolate looks."

"Was not his case unpleasant enough, without your making it worse?"

"Of course, papa, I ought to have been more considerate, but you know how easily I am run away with by high spirits."

"And I know you have the power to restrain them, Beatrice. You have no right to talk of being run away with, as if you were helpless."

"I know it is very wrong; I often think I will check myself, but there are many speeches which, when once they come to my lips, are irresistible, or seem so. However, I will not try to justify myself. I know I was to blame, only you must not be angry with Fred, for it really did seem rather unreasonable to keep him there parading about with Henrietta and Jessie, when the ice was quite safe for everybody else."

"I am not angry with him, Bee; I cannot but be sorry that he gave way to the temptation, but there was so much to excuse him, that I shall not show any further displeasure. He is often in a very vexatious position for a boy of his age. I can imagine nothing more galling than these restraints."

"And cannot you——" said Beatrice, stopping short.

"Speak to your aunt? I will not make her miserable. Anything she thinks right she will do, at whatever cost to herself, and for that very reason I will not interfere. It is a great deal better for Fred that his amusement should be sacrificed to her peace, than her peace to his amusement."

"Yet surely this cannot go on for life," said Beatrice, as if she were half afraid to hazard the remark.

"Never mind the future. She will grow more used to the other boys, and gain more confidence in Fred. Things will right themselves, if we do not set them wrong. And now, mark me. You are not a mere child, who can plead the excuse of thoughtlessness for leading him into mischief; you know the greatness of the sin of disobedience, and the fearful responsibility incurred by conducing to it in others. Do not help to lead him astray for the sake of —of vanity—of amusement."

Something in the manner in which he pronounced these words conveyed to Beatrice a sense of the emptiness and and worthlessness of her motives, and she answered, earnestly: "I was wrong, papa; I know it is a love of saying clever things that often leads me wrong. It was so to-day, for I could have stopped myself, but for the pleasure of making fun. It is vanity, and I will try to subdue it."

Beatrice had a sort of candid way of reasoning about her faults, and would blame herself, and examine her motives in a manner which disarmed reproof by forestalling it. She was perfectly sincere, yet it was self-deception, for it was not as if it was herself whom she was analyzing, but rather as if it was some character in a book; indeed, she would have described herself almost exactly as she is here described, except that her delineation would have been

much more clever and more exact. She would not have spared herself—for this reason, that her own character was more a study to her than a reality, her faults rather circumstances than sins; it was her mind, rather than her soul, that reflected and made resolutions, or more correctly, what would have been resolutions, if they had possessed any real earnestness, and not been done, as it were, mechanically, because they became the occasion.

The conversation was concluded by the sound of the luncheon bell, and she ran up to take off her bonnet, her thoughts taking the following course: "I am very sorry; it is too bad to tease poor Fred, cruel and wrong, and *all that*, only if he would not look absurd! It is too droll to see how provoked he is, when I take the least notice of Alex, and after all, I don't think he cares for me half as much as Alex does, only it flatters his vanity. Those great boys are really quite as vain as girls; not Alex, though, good downright fellow, who would do anything for me, and I have put him to a hard proof to-night. What a capital thought those charades are! Fred will meet the others on common, nay, on superior ground, and there will be none of these foolish questions who can be most manly mad. Fred is really a fine-spirited fellow though, and I thought papa could not find it in his heart to be angry with him. How capitally he will act, and how lovely Henrietta will look! I *must* make them take to the charades, it will be so very delightful, and keep Fred quite out of mischief, which will set Aunt Mary at ease. And how amused grandpapa will be! What shall it be to-night? What Alex can manage to act tolerably. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute*, and the *premier pas* must be with our best foot foremost. I give myself credit for the thought; it will make all smooth."

These meditations occupied her during a hasty toilet and a still more rapid descent, and were abruptly concluded by her alighting from her swinging jump down the last four steps close to Fred himself, who was standing by the hall fire with a gloomy expression of countenance, which with inconsiderate good-nature she hastened to remove. "Don't look dismal, Freddy; I have told papa all about it, and he does not *mind* it. Cheer up, you adventurous knight, I have some glorious fun for you this evening."

Not mind it! The impression thus conveyed to one but too willing to receive it, was that Uncle Geoffrey, that external conscience, thought him excused from attending to unreasonable prohibitions. Away went all the wholesome self-reproach which he had begun to feel, away went all fear of Uncle Geoffrey's eye, all compunction in meeting his mother, and he entered the dining-room in such lively

spirits that his uncle was vexed to see him so unconcerned, and his mother felt sure that her entreaty had not been disregarded. She never heard to the contrary, for she liked better to trust than to ask questions, and he, like far too many boys, did not think concealment blamable where there was no actual falsehood.

All the time they were at table Queen Bee was in one of her states of wild restlessness, and the instant she was at liberty, she flew away, and was seen no more that afternoon, except in certain flittings into different apartments, where she appeared for a moment or two with some extraordinary and mysterious request. First, she popped upon grandpapa, and with the expense of a little coaxing and teasing, obtained from him the loan of his deputy-lieutenant's uniform; then she darted into the drawing-room, on hearing Uncle Roger's voice, and conjured him not to forget to give a little note to Alex, containing these words: "Willy must wear his cap without a peak. Bring Roger's dirk, and, above all, beg, borrow, or steal, Uncle Roger's fishing-boots." Her next descent was upon Aunt Mary, in her own room: "Aunt, would you do me a great favor, and ask no questions, nor tell Henrietta? Do just lend me the three little marabout feathers which you had in your cap yesterday evening. Only for this one evening, and I'll take great care."

"I am sure, my dear, you are very welcome to them; I do not feel like myself in such finery," said Mrs. Frederick Langford, smiling, as Beatrice took possession of the elegant little white cap, which she had the discretion to carry to Bennet, its lawful protector, to be reft of its plumed honors. Bennet, an old friend of nursery days, was in the secret of her plans for the evening; her headquarters were in the workroom, which had often served her as a playroom in days gone by, and Judith, gratified by a visit from "Miss Bee," dived for her sake into boxes and drawers, amid hoards where none but Judith would have dared to rummage.

All this might ultimately be for Henrietta's entertainment, but at present it did not much conduce toward it, as she was left to her own resources in the drawing-room. She practiced a little, worked a little, listened to a consultation between grandpapa and Uncle Roger about the new pig-sty, wrote it down in her list when they went into the study to ask Uncle Geoffrey's advice, tried to talk over things in general with her mamma, but found it impossible with grandmamma continually coming in and out of the room, yawned, wondered what Busy Bee was about, felt deserted, gave up work, and had just found an entertaining book, when grandmamma came in, and invited her to

visit the poultry-yard. She readily accepted, but for want of Queen Bee to hurry her, kept grandmamma waiting longer than she liked, and had more of a scolding than was agreeable. The chickens were all gone to roost by the time they arrived, the cock just peering down at them, with his coral-bordered eye, and the ducks waddling stealthily in, one by one; the feeding was over, the hen-wife gone, and Mrs. Langford vexed at being too late.

Henrietta was annoyed with herself and with the result of the day, but she had some consolation, for as they were going toward the house they met Mr. Langford, who called out, "So you have been walking with grandmamma! Well, if you are not tired, come and have a little turn with grandpapa. I am going to speak with Daniels, the carpenter, and my 'merry Christmas' will be twice as welcome to his old father, if I take you with me."

Henrietta might be a little tired, but such an invitation was not to be refused, and she was at her grandpapa's side in an instant, thanking him so much that he laughed and said the favor was to him. "I wish we had Fred here too," said he, as they walked on, "the old man will be very glad to see you."

"Was he one of mamma's many admirers in the village?"

"All the village admired Miss Mary, but it was your father who was old Daniels' chief friend. The boys used to have a great taste for carpentry, especially your father, who was always at his elbow when he was at work at the Hall. Poor old man, I thought he would never have held up his head again when our great trouble came on us. He used to touch his hat, and turn away without looking me in the face. And there you may see stuck up over the chimney-piece in his cottage the new chisel that your father gave him when he had broken his old one."

"Dear old man!" said Henrietta, warmly, "I am so very glad that we have come here, where people really care for us, and are interested in us, and not for our own sake. How delightful it is! I feel as if we were come out of banishment."

"Well, it is all the better for you," said Mr. Langford; "if we had had you here, depend upon it, we should have spoiled you. We have so few granddaughters that we cannot help making too much of them. There is that little Busy Bee—by the bye, what is her plan this evening, or are not you in her secret?"

"Oh, no; I believe she is to surprise us all. I met her, just before I came out, dragging a huge bag after her; I I wanted to help her, but she would not let me."

"She turns us all round her finger," said grandpapa,

"I never found the person who could resist Queen Bee, except grandmamma. But I am glad you do not take after her, Henrietta, for one such grandchild is enough, and it is better for womankind to have *leadable* spirits than leading."

"O grandpapa!"

"That is a dissentient O. What does it mean? Out with it."

"Only that I was thinking about weakness; I beg your pardon, grandpapa."

"Look here!" and Mr. Langford bent the slender cane in his hand (he disdained a stronger walking-stick) to its full extent of suppleness. "Is this weak?"

"No, it is strong in energy," said Henrietta, laughing, as the elastic cane sprung back to its former shape.

"Yet to a certain point you can bend it as far as you please. Well, that should be the way with you; be turned any way but the wrong, and let your own determination be only to keep upright."

"But women are admired for influence."

"Influence is a good thing in its way, but only of a good sort when it is unconscious. At any rate, when you set to work to influence people, take care it is only with a view to their good, and not to your own personal wishes, or influencing becomes a dangerous trade, especially for young ladies toward their elders.

Grandpapa, who had only seen Henrietta carried about by Beatrice, grandmamma, or Fred, and willing to oblige them all, had little idea how applicable to her case was his general maxim, nor indeed did she at the moment take it to herself, although it was one day to return upon her. It brought them to the neat cottage of the carpenter, with the thatched workshop behind and the garden in front, which would have looked neat but for the melancholy aspect of the yellow, frost-bitten cabbages.

This was Henrietta's first cottage visit, and she was all eagerness and interest, picturing to herself a venerable old man, almost as fine looking as her grandfather, and as eloquent as old men in cottages always are in books; but she found it rather a disappointing meeting. It was a very nice, trim-looking daughter-in-law who opened the door, on Mr. Langford's knock, and the room was neatness itself, but the old carpenter was not at all what she had imagined. He was a little, stooping old man, with a shaking head, and weak red eyes under a green shade, and did not seem to have anything to say beyond "Yes, sir," and "Thank you, sir," when Mr. Langford shouted into his deaf ears some of the "compliments of the season." Looking at the young lady, whom he evidently mistook for

Beatrice, he hoped that Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey were quite well. His face lighted up a little for a moment when Mr. Langford told him this was Mr. Frederick's daughter, but it was only for an instant, and in a somewhat querulous voice he asked if there was not a young gentleman, too.

"O yes," said Mr. Langford, "he shall come and see you some day."

"He would not care to see a poor old man," said Daniels, turning a little away, while his daughter-in-law began to apologize for him by saying: "He is more lost than usual to-day, sir; I think it was getting tired going to church, yesterday morning; he did not sleep well, and he has been so fretful all the morning, a body did not know what to do with him."

Mr. Langford said a few more cheerful words to the poor old man, then asked the daughter where her husband was, and, hearing that he was in the workshop, refused offers of fetching him in, and went out to speak to him, leaving Henrietta to sit by the fire and wait for him. A weary waiting time she found it; shy as she was of poor people, as of a class with whom she was utterly unacquainted, feeling bound to make herself agreeable, but completely ignorant how to set about it, wishing to talk to the old man, and fearing to neglect him, but finding conversation quite impossible except with Mrs. Daniels, and not very easy with her—she tried to recollect what storied young ladies did say to old men, but nothing she could think of would do, or was what she could feel herself capable of saying. At last she remembered, in "Gertrude," the old nurse's complaint that Laura did not inquire after the rheumatism, and she hazarded her voice in expressing a hope that Mr. Daniels did not suffer from it.

Clear as the sweet voice was, it was too tremulous (for she was really in a fright of embarrassment) to reach the old man's ear, and his daughter-in-law took it upon her to repeat the inquiry in a shrill, sharp scream, that almost went through her ears; then, while the old man was answering something in a muttering, maundering way, she proceeded with a reply, and told a long story about his ways with the doctor, in her Sussex dialect, almost incomprehensible to Henrietta. The conversation dropped, until Mrs. Daniels began hoping that every one at the Hall was quite well, and as she inquired after them one by one, this took up a reasonable time; but then again followed a silence. Mrs. Daniels was not a native of Knight Sutton, or she would have had more to say about Henrietta's mother; but she had never seen her before, and had none of that interest in her that half the parish felt. Henrietta

wished there had been a baby to notice, but she saw no trace in the room of the existence of children, and did not like to ask if there were any. She looked at the open hearth, and said it was very comfortable, and was told in return that it made a great draught, and smoked very much. Then she bethought herself of admiring an elaborately worked frame sampler that that hung against the wall; and the conversation this supplied lasted her till, to her great joy, grandpapa made his appearance again, and summoned her to return, as it was already growing very dark.

She thought he might have made something of an apology for the disagreeableness of his friend; but, being used to it, and forgetting that she was not, he did no such thing; and she was wondering that cottage visiting could ever have been represented as so pleasant an occupation, when he began on a far more interesting subject, asking about her mother's health, and how she thought Knight Sutton agreed with her, saying how very glad he was to have her there again, and how like his own daughter she had always been. He went on to tell of his first sight of his two daughters-in-law, when, little guessing that they would be such, he went to fetch home the little Mary Vivian, who had come from India under the care of General St. Leger. "There they were," said he; "I can almost see them now, as their black nurse led them in; your aunt a brown little sturdy thing, ready to make acquaintance in a moment, and your mamma such a fair, shrinking, fragile morsel of a child, that I felt quite ashamed to take her among all my great scrambling boys."

"Ah! mamma says her recollection is all in bits and scraps; she recollects the ship, and she remembers sitting on your knee in a carriage; but she cannot remember either the parting with Aunt Geoffrey or the coming here."

"I do not remember about the parting with Aunt Geoffrey; they managed that in the nursery, I believe, but I shall never forget the boys receiving her—Fred and Geoffrey, I mean—for Roger was at school. How they admired her like some strange curiosity, and played with her like a little girl with a new doll. There was no fear that they would be too rough with her, for they used to touch her as if she were made of glass. And what a turn out of old playthings there was in her service!"

"That was when she was six," said Henrietta, "and papa must have been ten."

"Yes, thereabouts, and Geoffrey a year younger. How they did pet her! and come down to all their old baby-plays again for her sake, till I was almost afraid that cricket and hockey would be given up and forgotten."

"And were they?"

"No, no, trust boys for that. Little Mary came to be looker-on, if she did not sometimes play herself. She was a distressed damsel, and they knight and giant, or dragon, or I cannot tell what, though many's the time I have laughed over it. Whatever they pleased was she: never lived creature more without will of her own."

"Never," responded Henrietta; but that for which Mr. Langford might commend his little Mary at seven years old, did not appear so appropriate a subject of observation in Mrs. Frederick Langford, and by her own daughter.

"Eh!" said her grandfather. Then answering his mental objection in another tone, "Ay, ay, no will for her own pleasure; that depends more on you than on any one else."

"I would do anything on earth for her!" said Henrietta, feeling it from the bottom of her heart.

"I am sure you would, my dear," said Mr. Langford, "and she deserves it. There are few like her, and few that have gone through so much. To think of her as she was when last she was here, and to look at her now! Well, it won't do to talk of it; but I thought when I saw her face yesterday, that I could see, as well as believe, it was all for the best for her, as I am sure it was for us."

He was interrupted just as they reached the gate by the voice of his eldest son calling, "Out late, sir," and looking round, Henrietta saw what looked in the darkness like a long procession, Uncle and Aunt Roger, and their niece, and all the boys, as far down as William, coming to the Hall for the regular Christmas dinner-party.

Joining company, Henrietta walked with Jessie, and answered her inquiries whether she had got wet or cold in the morning; but it was in an absent manner, for she was all the time dwelling on what her grandfather had been saying. She was calling up in imagination the bright scenes of her mother's youth; those delightful games of which she had so often heard, and which she could place in their appropriate setting now that she knew the scenes. She ran up to her room, where she found only Bennet, her mother having dressed and gone down; and sitting down before the fire, and resigning her curls to her maid, she let herself dwell on the ideas the conversation had called up, turning from the bright to the darker side.

She pictured to herself the church, the open grave, her uncles and her grandfather round it, the villagers taking part in their grief, the old carpenter's averted head—she thought what must have been the agony of the moment, of laying in his untimely grave one so fondly loved, on whom the world was just opening so brightly—and the young wife—the infant children—how fearful it must have

been! "It was almost a cruel dispensation," thought Henrietta. "O, how happy and bright we might have been! What would it not have been to hold by his hand, to have his kiss, to look for his smile! And mamma, to have had her in all her joyousness and blitheness, with no ill-health, and no cares! O, why was it not so? And yet grandpapa said it was for the best! And in what a manner he did say it, as if he really felt and saw, and knew the advantage of it! To dear papa himself I know it was for the best, but for us, mamma, grandpapa—no, I never shall understand it. They were good before; why did they need punishment? Is this what is called saying 'Thy will be done'? Then I shall never be able to say it, and yet I ought!"

"Your head a little higher, if you please, Miss Henrietta," said Bennet; "it is that makes me so long dressing you, and your mamma has been telling me that I must get you ready faster."

Henrietta slightly raised her head for the moment, but soon let it sink again in her musings, and when Bennet reminded her, replied, "I can't, Bennet, it breaks my neck." Her will was not with her mother's, in a trifling matter of which the reasonableness could not but approve itself to her. How, then, was it likely to be bent to that of her Heavenly Parent, in what is above reason?

The toilet was at length completed, and in time for her to be handed in to dinner by Alexander, an honor which she owed to Beatrice having already been secured by Frederick, who was resoved not to be again abandoned to Jessie. Alex did not favor her with much conversation, partly because he was thinking with perturbation of the task set him for the evening, and partly because he was trying to hear what Queen Bee was saying to Fred, in the midst of the clatter of knives and forks, and the loud voice of Mr. Roger Langford, which was enough to drown most other sounds. Some inquiries had been made about Mrs. Geoffrey Langford and her aunt, Lady Susan St. Leger, which had led Beatrice into a great lamentation for her mother's absence, and from thence into a description of what Lady Susan exacted from her friends. "Aunt Susan is a regular fidget," said she; "not such a fidget as some people," with an indication to Mrs. Langford. "Some people are determined to make others comfortable in a way of their own, and that is a fidget to be regarded with considerable respect; but Aunt Susan's fidgeting takes the turn of sacrificing the comfort of every one else to her own and her little dog's."

"But that is very hard on Aunt Geoffrey," said Fred.

"Frightfully. Any one who was less selfish would have

insisted on mamma's coming here, instead of which Aunt Susan only complains of her sister and brother, and everybody else, for going out of London, when she may be taken suddenly ill at any time. She is in such a nervous state, that Mr. Peyton cannot tell what might be the consequence," said Beatrice, in an imitative tone, which made Fred laugh.

"I am sure I should leave her to take care of herself," said he.

"So do the whole family except ourselves; they are all worn out by her querulousness, and are not particularly given to patience and unselfishness either. But mamma is really fond of her, because she was kind to her when she came home from India, and she manages to keep her quiet better than any one else can. She can very seldom resist mamma's cheerful voice, which drives off half her nerves at once. You cannot think how funny it is to see how Aunt Amelia always seems to stroke the cat the wrong way, and mamma to smooth her down the right."

A lull in the conversation left these last words audible, and Mr. Langford said, "What is that about stroking the cat, Queenie?"

"Oh, you are telling it all—oh, don't, Bee!" cried Willy.

And with certain jokes about cats and bags, which seemed excessively to discomfort Willy, who protested the cat was not in the bag at all—it was the partridges—the conversation drifted away again from the younger party.

As soon as dinner was over, Beatrice again disappeared, after begging her grandmamma to allow the great Indian screen to remain as it at present stood, spread out so as to cut off one end of the room, where there was a door opening into the study. Behind this screen frequent rustlings were heard, with now and then a burst of laughing and whispering, and a sound of moving furniture, which so excited Mrs. Langford, that, starting up, she exclaimed that she must go and see what they could be doing.

"We are taking great care, grandmamma," called Alexander. "We won't hurt it."

This, by showing that there was something to be hurt, was so far from reassuring her, that she would certainly have set out on a voyage of discovery, but for Mr. Langford, who professed himself convinced that all was right, and said he would not have the Busy Bee disturbed.

She came in to tea, bringing Alex and Willy with her—the latter, in a marvelous state of misery and excitement, longing to tell all himself, and yet in great terror lest the others should tell.

As soon as the tea was dispatched the three actors de-

parted, and presently there was a call from behind the screen, "Are you ready, good people?"

"Go it," answered Carey.

"Are the elders ready?" said Beatrice's voice.

"Papa, don't go on talking to Uncle Geoffrey!" cried Willy.

"Ay, ay, all attention," said grandpapa. "Now for it."

The screen was folded back, and discovered Alex in a pasteboard crown, ermine tippet, and purple mantle, sitting enthroned with Beatrice (a tiara and feathers on her head) at his side, and kneeling before them a nondescript article, consisting chiefly of a fur cloak, a fur cap, adorned with a pair of gray squirrel cuffs, sewn ingeniously into the form of ears, a boa by way of tail, and an immense pair of boots. As uncle Geoffrey said, the cat was certainly out of the bag, and it proceeded in due form to take two real partridges from the bag, and present them to the king and princess in the name of the Marquis Carabbas.

The king and princess made some consultation as to who the marquis might be, the princess proposing to send for the peerage, and the king cross-examining puss in an incredulous way, which greatly puzzled him, until at length he bethought himself of exclaiming, in a fierce manner, "I've told you the truth, Mr. King, and if you won't believe me, I can't help it!" and walked off on his hind legs in as dignified and resentful a manner as his boots would let him; repairing to the drawing-room to have his accouterments admired, while the screeen was again spread in preparation for Scene II.

Scene II. presented but a half-length, a shawl being hung in front, so as to conceal certain incongruities. A great arm-chair was wheeled close to the table, on which stood an aged black jack out of the hall, a quart measure, and a silver tankard; while in the chair, a cushion on his head, and a great carving-knife held like a scepter in his hand, reclined Alex, his bulk enlarged by at least two pillows, over which an old long-breasted white satin waistcoat, embroidered with silver, had with some difficulty been brought to meet. Before him stood a little figure in a cloth cap, set jauntily on one side, decorated with a fox's brush, and with Mrs. Frederick Langford's three feathers, and a coat bearing marvelous resemblance to Beatrice's own black velvet spencer, crossed over one shoulder by a broad blue ribbon, which Henrietta knew full well. "Do thou stand for my father," began this droll little shape, "and examine me in the particulars of my life."

It was not badly carried out; Prince Henry, when he did

not giggle, acted beautifully; and Falstaff really did very well, though his eyes were often directly downward, and the curious, by standing on tiptoe, obtained not only a view of Prince Hal's pink petticoat, but of a Shakespeare laid open on the floor; and a very low bow on the part of the heir apparent, when about to change places with his fat friend, was strongly suspected of being for the purpose of turning over a leaf. It was with great spirit that the parting appeal was given, "Banish fat Jack, and banish all the world!" And there was great applause when fat Jack and Prince Hal jumped up and drew the screen forward again; though Uncle Geoffrey and Aunt Mary were cruel enough to utter certain historical and antiquarian doubts as to whether the Prince of Wales was likely to wear the three feathers and ribbon of the garter in his haunts at Eastcheap.

In the concluding scene the deputy lieutenant's uniform made a great figure, with the addition of the long-breasted waistcoat, a white scarf, and the white cockade, adorning Alex, who, with a boot-jack under his arm, looked as tall and as rigid as he possibly could, with a very low bow, which was gracefully returned by a royal personage in a Scottish bonnet, also bearing the white cockade, a tartan scarf, and the blue ribbon. Altogether Prince Charles Edward and the Baron of Bradwardine stood confessed; the charter was solemnly read, and the shoe pulled off, or supposed to be, as the lower screen still remained to cut off the view, and then the baron indulged in a lengthy yawn and stretch, while Prince Charlie, skipping into the midst of the audience, danced round Mr. Langford, asking if he had guessed it.

CHAPTER X.

BEATRICE had not judged amiss when she thought charade acting an amusement likely to take the fancy of her cousins. The great success of her *boot-jack* inspired both Frederick and Henrietta with eagerness to imitate it; and nothing was talked of but what was practicable in the way of scenes, words, and decorations. The Sutton Leigh party were to dine at the Hall again on Thursday, and it was resolved that there should be a great charade, with all the splendor that due preparation could bestow upon it. "It was such an amusement to grandpapa," as Beatrice told Henrietta, "and it occupied Fred so nicely," as she said to her father; both which observations being perfectly true, Mr. Geoffrey Langford was very willing to promote the sport, and to tranquilize his mother respecting the disarrangement of her furniture.

But what should the word be? Every one had predilections of their own—some for comedy, others for tragedy; some for extemporary acting, others for Shakespeare. Beatrice, with her eye for drawing, already grouped her *dramatis personæ*, so as to display Henrietta's picturesque face and figure to the grandest advantage, and had designs of making her and Fred represent Catherine and Henry Seyton, whom, as she said, she had always believed to be exactly like them. Fred was inclined for "another touch at Prince Hal," and devised numerous ways of acting Anonymous, for the sake of "Anon, anon, sir." Henrietta wanted to contrive something in which Queen Bee might appear as an actual fairy bee, and had very pretty visions of making her a beneficent spirit in a little fanciful opera, for which she had written three or four verses, when Fred put an end to it by pronouncing it "nonsense and humbug."

So passed Tuesday, without coming to any decision, and Henrietta was beginning to fear that they would never fix at all, when on Wednesday morning Beatrice came down in an ecstasy with the news, that by some chance a wig of her papa's was in the house, and a charade they must and would have which would bring in the wig. "Come and see it," said she, drawing her two cousins into the study after breakfast; the study being the safest place for holding counsel on these secret subjects. "There now, is it not charming? Oh, a law charade we must have, that is certain!"

Fred and Henrietta, who had never chanced to see a barrister's wig before, were greatly diverted with its little tails, and tried it on in turn. Whilst Henrietta was in the midst of her laugh at the sight of her own fair ringlets hanging out below the tight gray rolls, the door suddenly opened, and gave entrance to its owner, fiercely exclaiming: "What! nothing safe from you, you impertinent kittens?"

"Oh, Uncle Geoffrey, I beg your pardon!" cried Henrietta, blushing crimson.

"Don't take it off till I have looked at you," said Uncle Geoffrey. "Why, you would make a capital Portia!"

"Yes, yes!" cried Queen Bee, "that is it; Portia she shall be, and I'll be Nerissa."

"Oh, no, Queenie, I could never be Portia!" said Henrietta; "I am sure I can't."

"But I have set my heart on being the 'little scrubby lawyer's clerk,'" said Busy Bee; "it is what I am just fit for; and let me see—Fred shall be Antonio, and that will make you plead from your very heart, and you shall have Alex for your Bassanio."

"But the word. Do you mean to make it fit in with Falstaff and Catherine Seyton?" said Henrietta.

"Let me see," said Beatrice; "bond—bondage, jew—jeweler, juniper——"

"Lawsuit," said Fred. "Ay, don't you see, all the scenes would come out of the 'Merchant of Venice.' There is 'law' when the old Jew is crying out for his ducats, and—but halloo!" and Fred stood aghast at the sight of his uncle, whose presence they had all forgotten in their eagerness.

"Traitor!" said Beatrice; "but never mind, I believe we must have let him into the plot, for nobody else can be Shylock."

"Oh, Bee," whispered Henrietta, reproachfully, "don't tease him with our nonsense. Think of asking him to study Shylock's part, when he has all that pile of papers on the table."

> "Jessica, my girl,
> Look to my house. I am right loath to go;
> There is some ill a-brewing to my rest,
> For I did dream of money-bags to-night."

Such was Uncle Geoffrey's reply; his face and tone so suddenly altered to the snarl of the old Jew, that his young companions at first started, and then clapped their hands in delighted admiration.

"Do you really know it all?" asked Henrietta, in a sort of respectful awe.

"It won't cost me much trouble to get it up," said Mr. Geoffrey Langford; "Shylock's growls stick in one's memory better than finer speeches."

"Then will you really be so very kind?"

"Provided you will leave the prompter of Monday night on the table this morning," said Uncle Geoffrey, smiling in that manner which, to a certain degree, removed any feeling of obligation by making it seem as if it was entirely for his own diversion. Nor could it be denied that he did actually enjoy it.

The party took up their quarters in the study, which really was the only place fit for consultations and rehearsals, since Fred and Alex could not be taken to the maids' workroom, and none of the down-stairs apartments could be made subject to the confusion incidental to their preparations. Henrietta had many scruples at first about disturbing Uncle Geoffrey, but his daughter laughed at them all; and they were soon at an end when she perceived that he minded their chattering, spouting, and laughing, no more than if they had been so many little sparrows twittering on the eaves, but pursued the even tenor of his writing, uninterruptedly, even whilst she fitted on his head a yel-

low pointed cap which her ingenious fingers had compounded of the lining of certain ugly old curtains.

His presence in this silent state served, too, as a protection in Mrs. Langford's periodical visitations to stir the fire; but for him, she would assuredly have found fault, and possibly Beatrice have come to a collision with her, which would have put an end to the whole scheme.

It formed a considerable addition to Henrietta's list of his avocations, and really by making the utmost of everything he did for other people during that whole week, she made the number reach even to seventy-nine by the next Thursday morning. The most noted of these employments were the looking over a new act of Parliament with the county member, the curing grandmamma's old gander of a mysterious lameness, the managing of an emigration of a whole family to New Zealand, the guessing a riddle supposed "to have no answer," and the mending of some extraordinary spring that was broken in Uncle Roger's new drill. Beatrice was charmed with the list; Aunt Mary said it was delightful to be so precious to every one; and grandpapa, shaking his head at his son, said he was ashamed to find that his family contained such a "Jack of all trades;" to which Uncle Geoffrey replied, that it was too true that "all work and no play made Jack a very dull boy."

The breaking up of the frost, with a succession of sleet, snow, and rain, was much in favor of Beatrice and her plans, by taking away all temptation from the boys to engage in out-of-door amusements; and Antonio and Bassanio studied their parts so diligently, that Carey was heard to observe that it might as well be the half year. They had, besides their own proper parts, to undertake those of the Princes of Arragon and Morocco, since Queen Bee, willing to have as much of Nerissa as possible, had determined to put their choice, and that of Bassanio, all into the one scene belonging to "suit." It was one of those occasions on which she showed little consideration, for she thus gave Portia an immense quantity to learn in only two days, persuading herself all the time that it was no such hard task, since the beautiful speech about mercy Henrietta already knew by heart, and she made no difficulty about the rest. Indeed, Beatrice thought herself excessively amiable in doing all she could to show off her cousin's beauty and acting, whilst taking a subordinate part herself; forgetting that humility is not shown in choosing a part, but in taking willingly that which is assigned us.

Henrietta was rather appalled at the quantity she had to learn, as well as at the prominent part she was to take; but she did not like to spoil the pleasure of the rest with

objections, and applied herself with good earnest to her study. She walked about with a little Shakespeare in her hand; she learned while she was dressing, working, waiting, sat up late, resisting many a summons from her mother to come to bed, and, long before daylight, was up and learning again.

The great evening had come, and the audience were thus arranged: grandmamma took up her carpet-work, expressing many hopes to Aunt Roger that it would be over now and out of the children's heads, for they turned the house upside down, and, for her part, she thought it very like play-acting. Aunt Roger, returning the sentiment with interest, took out one of the little brown holland frocks, which she seemed to be always making. Uncle Roger composed himself to sleep in the arm-chair for want of his brother to talk to; grandpapa moved a sofa to the front for Aunt Mary, and sat down by her, declaring that they would see something very pretty, and hoping it would not be too hard a nut for his old wits to crack; Jessie, and such of the boys as could not be persuaded to be magnificos, found themselves a convenient station, and the scene opened.

It was a very short one, but it made every one laugh greatly, thanks to Shylock's excellent acting, and the chorus of boys, who greatly enjoyed chasing him across the stage, crying, "The law, his ducats, and his daughter!"

Then, after a short interval, appeared Portia, a silver arrow in her hair, almost lovely enough for the real Portia; though the alarmed expression in her glowing face was little accordant with the calm dignified self-possession of the noble Venetian heiress. Nerissa, a handkerchief folded squarely over her head, short petticoats, scarlet lamb's wool worked into her stockings, and a black apron trimmed with bright ribbon, made a complete little Italian waiting-maid; her quick, pert reply to her lady's first faltering speech, seemed wonderfully to restore Portia to herself, and they got on well and with spirit through the description of the suitors, and the choice of the two first caskets. Portia looked excessively dignified, and Nerissa's by-play was capital. Whether it was owing to Bassanio's awkwardness or her own shyness, she did not prosper quite so well when the leaden casket was chosen; Bassanio seemed more afraid of her than rejoiced, and looked much more at Nerissa than at her, whilst she moved as slowly, and spoke in as cold and measured a way, as if it had been the Prince of Morocco who had unfortunately hit upon the right casket.

In the grand concluding scene she was, however, all that could be wished. She really made a very pretty picture, in

the dark robes, the glowing carnation of her cheek contrasting with the gray wig, beneath which a few bright ringlets still peeped out; one little white hand raised, and the other holding the parchment, and her eyes fixed on the Jew as if she either imagined herself Portia, or saw her brother in Antonio's case, for they glistened with tears, and her voice had a tremulous pleading tone, which fairly made her grandfather and mother both cry heartily.

"Take, then, thy bond; take thou thy pound of flesh!"

The duke (little Willy) was in an agony, and was forcibly withheld by Bassanio from crying, "No, he sha'n't!" Nerissa was so absorbed as even to have forgotten herself; Shylock could hardly keep his countenance up to the necessary expression of malice and obduracy; even Johnny and Dick were hanging with breathless attention on the "but," when suddenly there was a general start throughout the party; the door opened; Atkins, with a voice and face full of delight, announced "Master Roger," and there entered a young man, in a pea-jacket and worsted comforter.

Such confusion, such rapture as ensued! The tumultuous welcomes and hand-shakings before the sailor had time to distinguish one from another, the actors assuming their own characters, grandmamma and Mrs. Roger Langford asking dozens of questions in a breath, and Mr. Roger Langford fast asleep in his great arm-chair, till roused by Dick tugging at his arm, and Willy hammering on his knee, he slowly rose, saying:

"What, Roger, my boy, is it you? I thought it was all their acting!"

"Ah! Miss Jessie," exclaimed Roger; "that is right; I have not seen such a crop of shining curls since I have been gone. So you have not lost your pink cheeks with pining for me. How are they all at home?"

"Here, Roger, your Aunt Mary," said his mother; and instantly there was a subduing of the young sailor's boisterous mirth, as he turned to answer her gentle welcome. The laugh arose the next moment at the appearance of the still half-disguised actors: Alex without Bassanio's short black cloak and slouched hat and feather, but still retaining his burnt-cork eyebrows and mustache, and wondering that Roger did not know him; Uncle Geoffrey still in Shylock's yellow cap, and Fred somewhat grim with the Prince of Morocco's complexion.

"How d'ye do, Phil?" said Roger, returning his cousinly shake of the hand with interest. "What! are you not Philip Carey?"

"Oh, Roger, Roger!" cried a small figure, in whom the Italian maiden predominated.

"What, Aunt Geoffrey masquerading too? How d'ye do, aunt?"

"Well done, Roger! That's right! Go on!" cried his father, laughing heartily.

"Is it not my aunt? No? Is it the little Bee, then? Why you are grown as like her! But where is Aunt Geoffrey, then? Not here? That is a bore. I thought you would have all been in port here at Christmas. And is not this Philip? Come tell me, some of you, instead of standing laughing there. Are you Fred Langford, then?"

"Right this time," said Fred, "so now you must shake hands with me in my own name."

"Very glad to do so, and see you here at last," said Roger, cordially. "And now tell me, what is all this about? One would think you were crossing the line?"

"You shall hear what it is all about, and see too," said Mr. Langford. "We must have that wicked old Jew disappointed, must not we, Willy? But where is my little Portia? What is become of her?"

"Fled, I suspect," said her mother, "gone to turn into herself before her introduction."

"Oh, Roger, it was so jolly," Carey was now heard to say above the confusion of voices. "Uncle Geoffrey was an old Jew, going to cut a pound of flesh out of Fred, and Henrietta was making a speech, in a lawyer's wig, and had just found such a dodge!"

"Ha! like the masks in the carnival at Rio! Ferrars and I went ashore there, and——"

"Have you been at Sutton Leigh, Roger?" "Have you dined?" "Cold turkey—excellent Christmas pie, only too much pepper—a cup of tea—no, but we will have the beef in——"

Further conversation was suspended by these propositions, with the answers and thanks resulting therefrom, but in the midst grandpapa exclaimed, "Ah! here she is! Here is the counselor! Here is a new cousin for you, Roger; here is the advocate for you when you have a tough lawsuit! Lucky for you, Master Geoffrey, that she is not a man, or your nose would soon be put out of joint. You little rogue! How dared you make your mother and grandfather cry their hearts out?"

"I was very glad to see you as bad as myself, sir," said Mrs. Frederick Langford. "I was very much ashamed of being so foolish, but then, you know, I could hardly ever read through that scene without crying."

"Ah! you are a prudent mamma, and will not let her be conceited. But to see Geoffrey, with his lips quivering,

and yet frowning and looking savage with all his might and main! Well, you are a capital set of actors, all of you, and we must see the end of it."

This was the great desire of Beatrice, and she was annoyed with Henrietta for having thrown aside her borrowed garments, but the Fates decreed otherwise. The Christmas pie came in, grandpapa proceeded to carve it, and soon lost the remembrance of the charade in talking to his eldest grandson about his travels. A sailor just returned from four years on the South American coast, who had doubled Cape Horn, shot condors on the Andes, caught goats at Juan Fernandez, fished for sharks in the Atlantic, and heard parrots chatter in the Brazilian woods, could not fail to be very entertaining, even though he cared not for the Incas of Peru, and could tell little about the beauties of an iceberg; and accordingly every one was greatly entertained except the Queen Bee, who sat in a corner of the sofa, playing with her watch-chain, wondering how long Roger would go on eating pie, looking at the time-piece, and strangling the yawns induced by her inability to attract the notice of either of her squires, whose eyes and ears were all for the new-comer. She was not even missed; if she had been, it would have been some consolation; but on they went, listening and laughing, as if the course of the Euphrosyne, her quick sailing, and the adventures of her crew, were the only subjects of interest in the world. He was only at home for a week, but so much the worse; that would be till the end of Beatrice's own visit, and she supposed it would be nothing but Euphrosyne the whole time.

There was at last a change: Roger had half a hundred questions to ask about his cousins and all the neighbors.

"And has Philip Carey set up for himself at Allonfield? Does he get any practice? I have a great mind to be ill; it would be such a joke to be doctored by Master Philip!"

"Ah! to think of your taking Mr. Frederick for poor Philip," said Jessie. "I assure you," nodding to Fred, "I take it as a great compliment, and so will Philip."

"And is Fanny Evans as pretty as ever?"

"Oh! grown quite fat and coarse," said Jessie; "but you may judge for yourself on Monday. Dear Mrs. Langford is so kind as to give us a regular Christmas party, and all the Evanses and Dittons are coming. And we are to dance in the dining-room, the best place for it in the county; the floor is so much better laid down than in the Allonfield assembly-room."

"No such good place for dancing as the deck of a frigate," said Roger. "This time last year we had a ball on board the Euphroysne at Rio. I took the prettiest girl

there in to supper—don't be jealous, Jessie, she had not such cheeks as yours. She was better off there than in the next ball where I met her, in the town. She fancied she had got rather a thick sandwich at supper; she peeped in, and what do you think she found? A great monster of a cockroach, twice as big as any you ever saw."

"Oh, you horrid wretch!" cried Jessie, "I am sure it was your doing. I am sure you will give me a scorpion, or some dreadful creature! I won't let you take me in to supper on Monday, I declare."

"Perhaps I won't have you. I mean to have Cousin Henrietta for my partner, if she will have me."

"Thank you, Cousin Roger," faltered Henrietta, blushing crimson, with the doubt whether she was saying the right thing, and fearing Jessie might be vexed.

Her confusion was increased the next moment, as Roger, looking at her more fully than he had done before, went on:

"Much honored, cousin. Now, all of you wish me joy. I am safe to have the prettiest girl in the room for my partner. But how slow of them all not to have engaged her before. Eh! Alex, what have you to say for yourself?"

"I hope for Queen Bee," said Alex.

"And Jessie must dance with me, because I don't know how," said Carey.

"My dears, this will never do!" interposed grandmamma. "You can't all dance with each other, or what is to become of the company? I never heard of such a thing. Let me see: Queen Bee must open the ball with little Henry Hargrave, and Roger must dance with Miss Benson."

"No, no," cried Roger, "I won't give up my partner, ma'am; I am a privileged person, just come home. Knight Sutton has not had too much of Henrietta or me, so you must let us be company. Come, Cousin Henrietta, stick fast to your engagement; you can't break the first promise you ever made me. Here," proceeded he, jumping up and holding out his hands, "let us begin this minute; I'll show you how we waltz with the Brazilian ladies."

"Thank you, Cousin Roger, I cannot waltz," said Henrietta.

"That's a pity. Come, Jessie, then."

If the practice of waltzing was not to be admired, there was something which was very nice in the perfect good-humor with which Jessie answered her cousin's summons, without the slightest sign of annoyance at his evident preference of Henrietta's newer face.

"If I can't waltz, I can play for you," said Henrietta, willing not to seem disobliging; and going to the piano, she played whilst Roger and Jessie whirled merrily round the

room, every now and then receiving shocks against the furniture, and minding them not the least in the world, till at last, perfectly out of breath, they dropped laughing upon the sofa.

The observations upon the wild spirits of sailors ashore then sunk into silence; Mrs. Roger Langford reproved her son for making such a racket, as was enough to kill his Aunt Mary; with a face of real concern he apologized from the bottom of his heart, and Aunt Mary in return assured him that she enjoyed the sight of his merriment.

Grandmamma announced in her most decided tone that she would have no waltzes and no polkas at her party. Roger assured her that there was no possibility of giving a dance without them, and Jessie seconded him as much as she ventured; but Mrs. Langford was unpersuadable, declaring that she would have no such things in her house. Young people in her days were contented to dance country dances; if they wanted anything newer, they might have quadrilles, but as to these new romps, she would not hear of them.

And here, for once in her life, Beatrice was perfectly agreed with her grandmamma, and she came to life again, and sat forward to join in the universal condemnation of waltzes and polkas that was going on round the table.

With this drop of consolation to her, the party broke up, and Jessie, as she walked home to Sutton Leigh, found great solace in determining within herself that at any rate waltzing was not half so bad as dressing up and play-acting, which she was sure her mamma would never approve.

Beatrice came to her aunt's room, when they went upstairs, and petitioned for a little talk, and Mrs. Frederick Langford, with kind pity for her present motherless condition, accepted her visit, and even allowed her to outstay Bennet, during whose operations the discussion of the charade, and the history of the preparations and contrivances gave subject to a very animated conversation.

Then came matters of more interest. What Beatrice seemed above all to wish for, was to relieve herself by the expression of her intense dislike to the ball, and all the company, very nearly without exception, and there were few elders to whom a young damsel could talk so much without restraint as to Aunt Mary.

The waltzing, too, how glad she was that grandmamma had forbidden it, and here Henrietta chimed in. She had never seen waltzing before, had only heard of it as people in their quiet homes hear and think of the doings of the fashionable world, and in her simplicity was perfectly shocked and amazed at Jessie, a sort of relation, practicing it and pleading for it.

"My dear," said Beatrice, laughing, "I do not know what you would do if you were me, when there is Matilda St. Leger *polkaing* away half the days of her life."

"Yes, but Lady Matilda is a regular fashionable young lady."

"Ay, and so is Jessie at heart. It is the elegance, and the air, and the society that are wanting, not the will. It is the circumstances that make the difference, not the temper."

"Quite true, Busy Bee," said her aunt, "temper may be the same in very different circumstances."

"But it is very curious, mamma," said Henrietta, "how people can be particular in one point, and not in another. Now, Bee, I beg your pardon, only I know you don't mind it, Jessie did not approve of your skating."

"Yes," said Beatrice, "every one has scruples of his own, and laughs at those of other people."

"Which I think ought to teach Busy Bees to be rather less stinging," said Aunt Mary.

"But then, mamma," said Henrietta, "we must hold to the right scruples, and what are they? I do not suppose that in reality Jessie is less—less desirous of avoiding all that verges toward a want of propriety than we are, yet she waltzes. Now we were brought up to dislike such things."

"Oh, it is just according to what you are brought up to," said Beatrice. "A Turkish lady despises us for showing our faces; it is just as you think it."

"No, that will not do," said Henrietta. "Something must be actually wrong. Mamma, do say what you think."

"I think, my dear, that woman has been mercifully endowed with an instinct which discerns unconsciously what is becoming or not, and whatever at the first moment jars on that sense is unbecoming in her own individual case. The fineness of the perception may be destroyed by education, or willful dulling, and often on one point it may thus be silent, though alive and active on others."

"Yes," said Henrietta, as if satisfied.

"And above all," said her mother, "it, like other gifts, grows dangerous; it may become affectation."

"Pruding," said Beatrice, "showing openly that you like it to be observed how prudent and proper you are."

"Whereas true delicacy would shrink from showing that it is conscious of anything wrong," said Henrietta. "Wrong I do not exactly mean, but something on the borders of it."

"Yes," said Aunt Mary, "and above all, do not let this delicacy show itself in the carping at other people, which

only exalts our own opinion of ourselves, and very soon turns into 'judging our neighbor.'"

"But there is false delicacy, aunt."

"Yes, but it would be false kindness to enter on a fresh discussion to-night, when you ought to be fast asleep."

CHAPTER XI.

THE Queen Bee, usually undisputed sovereign of Knight Sutton, found in her Cousin Roger a formidable rival. As son and heir, elder brother, and newly arrived after five years' absence, he had considerable claims to attention, and his high spirits, sailor manners, sea-stories, and bold open temper, were in themselves such charms that it was no wonder that Frederick and Alexander were seduced from their allegiance, and even grandpapa was less than usual the property of his granddaughter.

This, however, she might have endured, had the sailor himself been amenable to her power, for his glories would then have become hers, and have afforded her further opportunities of coquetting with Fred. But between Roger and her there was little in common; he was not, and never had been, accessible to her influence; he regarded her, indeed, with all the open-hearted affection of cousinly intercourse, but for the rest, thought her much too clever for him, and far less attractive than either Henrietta or Jessie.

If she would, Henrietta might have secured his devotion, for he was struck with her beauty, and considered it a matter of credit to himself to engross the prettiest person present. Had Beatrice been in her place, it may be doubted how far love of power, and the pleasure of teasing, might have carried her out of her natural character into the style that suited him; but Henrietta was too simple, and her mind too full of her own affairs even to perceive that he distinguished her. She liked him, but she showed none of the little airs which would have seemed to appropriate him. She was ready to be talked to, but only as she gave the attention due to any one, nay, showing, because she felt, less eagerness than if it had been grandpapa, Queen Bee, or Fred, a talk with the last of whom was a pleasure now longed for, but never enjoyed. To his stories of adventures, or accounts of manners, she lent a willing and a delighted ear; but all commonplace jokes tending to flirtation fell flat; she either did not catch them, or did not catch at them. She might blush and look confused, but it was uncomfortable, and not gratified embarrassment, and if she found an answer, it was one either to change the subject, or honestly manifest that she was not pleased.

She did not mortify Roger, who liked her all the time; and if he thought at all, only considered her as shy or grave, and still continued to admire her, and seek her out, whenever his former favorite, Jessie, was not in the way to rattle with in his usual style. Jessie was full of enjoyment, Henrietta was glad to be left to her own devices, her mamma was still more rejoiced to see her act so properly without self-consciousness or the necessity of interference, and the Queen Bee ought to have been duly grateful to the one faithful vassal who was proof against all allurements from her side and service.

She ought, but the melancholy fact is that the devotion of womankind is usually taken as a matter of course. Beatrice would have despised and been very angry with Henrietta had she deserted to Roger, but she did not feel in the least grateful for her adherence, and would have been much more proud of retaining either of the boys. There was one point on which their attention could still be commanded, namely, the charades; for though the world may be of opinion that they had had quite a sufficiency of that amusement, they were but the more stimulated by their success on Thursday, and the sudden termination in the very height of their triumph.

They would, perhaps, have favored the public with a repetition of Shylock's trial the next evening, but that to the great consternation, and, perhaps, indignation of Beatrice, when she came down to breakfast in the morning, she found their tiring room, the study, completely cleared of all their various goods and chattels, Portia's wig in its box, the three caskets gone back to the dressing-room, the duke's throne safe in its place in the hall, and even Shylock's yellow cap picked to pieces, and rolled up in the general hoard of things which were to come of use in seven years' time. Judith, who was putting the finishing touches to the re-arrangement, by shaking up the cushions of the great chair, and restoring the ink-stand to its place in the middle of the table, gave in answer to her exclamations the information that "Missus had been up since seven o'clock helping to put away the things herself, for she said she could not bear to have Mr. Geoffrey's room not fit for anybody to sit in." This might certainly be considered as a tolerably broad hint that they had better discontinue their representations, but they were arrived at that state of eagerness which may be best illustrated by the proverb referring to a blind horse. Every one, inclined to that same impetuosity, and want of soberness, can remember the dismay with which hosts of such disregarded checks will recur to the mind when too late, and the poor satisfaction of the self justification which truly answers

that their object was not even comprehended. Henrietta, accustomed but little to heed such indications of dissent from her will, did not once think of her grandmamma's dislike, and Beatrice with her eyes fully open to it, willfully despised it as a fidgety fancy.

Henrietta had devised a series of scenes for the word assassin, and greatly delighted the imagination of her partners by a proposal to make a pair of asses' ears of cotton velvet for the adornment of Bottom the weaver. Fred fell back in his chair in fits of laughing at the device, and Queen Bee capered and danced about the room, declaring her worthy to be her own "*primest* of viziers."

"And," said Beatrice, "what an exquisite interlude it will make to relieve the various plagues of Monday evening."

"Why, you don't mean to act then!" exclaimed Henrietta.

"Why not? You don't know what a relief it will be. It will be an excuse for getting away from all the stupidity."

"To be sure it will," cried Fred. "A bright thought, Mrs. Bee. We shall have it all to ourselves in the study in comfort."

"But would grandmamma ever let us do it?" said Henrietta.

"I will manage," said Beatrice. "I will make grandpapa agree to it, and then she will not mind. Think how he enjoyed it."

"Before so many people!" said Henrietta. "O, Queenie, it will never do! It would be a regular exhibition."

"My dear, what nonsense!" said Beatrice. "Why, it is all among friends and neighbors."

"Friends and neighbors to you," said Henrietta.

"And yours too. Fred, she is deserting! I thought you meant to adopt or inherit all Knight Sutton and its neighborhood could offer."

"A choice inheritance that neighborhood, by your account," said Fred. "But come, Henrietta, you must not spoil the whole affair by such nonsense and affectation!"

"Affectation! O Fred!"

"Yes, to be sure it is," said Fred; "to set up such scruples as these. Why, you said yourself that you forget all about the spectators when once you get into the spirit of the thing."

"And what is affectation," said Beatrice, seeing her advantage, "but thinking what other people will think!"

There are few persuasions to which a girl who claims to

possess some degree of sense is more accessible, than the imputation of affectation, especially when brought forward by a brother, and enforced by a clever and determined friend. Such a feeling is no doubt often very useful in preventing folly, but it may sometimes be perverted to the smothering of wholesome scruples. Henrietta only pressed one point more, she begged not to be Titania.

"O, you must, you silly child," said Beatrice. "I have such designs for dressing you! Besides, I mean to be Mustardseed, and make grandpapa laugh by my by-play at the giant Ox-beef."

"But consider, Bee," said Henrietta, "how much too tall I am for a fairy. It would be too absurd to make Titania as large as Bottom himself—spoil the whole picture. You might surely get some little girls to be the other fairies, and take Titania yourself."

"Certainly it might conciliate the people to have their own children made part of the show," said Beatrice. "Little Anna Carey has sense enough, I think; ay, and the two Nevilles, if they will not be shy. We will keep you to come out in grand force in the last scene—Queen Eleanor sucking the poison. Aunt Mary has a certain black lace scarf that will make an excellent Spanish mantilla. Or else, suppose you are Berengaria, coming to see King Richard, when he was 'old-man-of-the-mountained.'"

"No, no," cried Fred, "stick to the Queen Eleanor scene. We will have no more blacking of faces. Yesterday I was too late down-stairs, because I could not get the abominable stuff out of my hair."

"And it would be a cruel stroke to be taken for Philip Carey again, in the gentleman's own presence, too," said Beatrice. "Monsieur is *apparemment* the *apothecaire de famille*. Do you remember, Henrietta, the French governess in Miss Edgworth's book?"

"Jessie smiled and nodded as if she was perfectly enchanted with the mistake," said Henrietta.

"And I do not wonder at it," said Beatrice, "the mistake, I mean. Fred's white hands there have just the look of a doctor's; of course Roger thought the only use for them could be to feel pulses, and Philip, for want of something better to do, is always trying for a genteel look."

"You insulting creature!" said Fred. "Just as if I tried to look genteel."

"You do, then, whether you try or not. You can't help it, you know, and I am very sorry for you; but you do stand and walk, and hold out your hand just as Philip is

always trying to do, and it is no wonder Roger thought he had succeeded in attaining his object."

"But what a goose the man must be to make such absurdity his object," said Henrietta.

"He could not be a Carey and be otherwise," said Busy Bee. "And besides, what would you have him do? As to getting any practice, unless his kith and kin choose to victimize themselves philanthropically according to Roger's proposal, I do not see what chance he has, where every one knows the extent of a Carey's intellects; and what is left for the poor man to do but to study the cut of his boots?"

"If you say much more about it, Queenie," said Henrietta, "you will make Fred dance in Bottom's hob-nailed shoes."

"Ah! it is a melancholy business," said Beatrice; "but it cannot be helped. Fred cannot turn into a clodhopper. But what earthquake is this?" exclaimed she, as the front door was dashed open with such violence as to shake the house, and the next moment Alexander rushed in, heated and almost breathless. "Rats! rats!" was his cry; "Fred, that's right. But where is Uncle Geoffrey?"

"Gone to Allonfield."

"More's the pity. There are a whole host of rats in the great barn at home. Pincher caught me one just now, and they are going to turn the place regularly out, only I got them to wait while I came up here for you and Uncle Geoffrey. Come, make haste, fly—like smoke—while I go and tell grandpapa."

Off flew Fred to make his preparations, and off to the drawing-room hurried Alex to call grandpapa. He was greeted by a reproof from Mrs. Langford for shaking the house enough to bring it down, and grandpapa laughed, thanked him, and said he hoped to be at Sutton Leigh in time for the rat-hunt, as he was engaged to drive grandmamma and Aunt Mary thither and to the Pleasance that afternoon.

Two seconds more, and Fred and Alex were speeding away together, and the girls went up to put on their bonnets to walk and meet their elders at Sutton Leigh. For once Beatrice let Henrietta be as slow as she pleased, for she was willing to let as much of the visit as possible pass before they arrived there. They walked along, merrily concocting their arrangements for Monday evening, until at length they came to the gates of Sutton Leigh, and already heard the shouts of triumph, the barking of dogs, and the cackle of terrified poultry, which proclaimed that the war was at its height.

"O! the glories of a rat hunt!" cried Beatrice. "Come,

Henrietta, here is a safe place whence to contemplate it, and really it is a sight not to be lost."

Henrietta thought not indeed when she looked over a gate leading into the farmyard on the side opposite to the great old barn, raised on a multitude of stone posts, a short ladder reaching to the wide doors which were folded back so as to display the heaps of straw thrown violently back and forward; the dogs now standing in attitudes of ecstatic expectation, tail straight out, head bent forward, now springing in rapture on the prey; the boys rushing about with their huge sticks, and coming down now and then with thundering blows, the laborers with their white shirt sleeves and pitch-forks pulling down the straw, Uncle Roger with a portentous-looking club in the thick of the fight. On the ladder, cheering them on, stood grandpapa, holding little Tom in his arms, and at the bottom, armed with small sticks, were Charlie and Arthur, consoling themselves for being turned out of the *melee*, by making quite as much noise as all those who were doing real execution, thumping unmercifully at every unfortunate dead mouse or rat that was thrown out, and charging fiercely at the pigs, ducks, and geese that now and then came up to inspect proceedings, and perhaps, for such accidents will occur in the best regulated families, to devour a share of the prey.

Beatrice's first exclamation was: "O! if papa was but here!"

"Nothing can go on without him, I suppose," said Henrietta. "And yet, is this one of his great enjoyments?"

"My dear, don't you know it is a part of the privilege of a free-born Englishman to delight in hunting 'rats and mice and such small deer,' as much or more than the grand *chasse*? I have not the smallest doubt that all the old cavaliers were fine old farm-loving fellows, who liked a rat-hunt, and enjoyed turning out a barn with all their hearts."

"There goes Fred!" cried Henrietta.

"Ah! capital. He takes to it by nature, you see. There —there! O what a scene it is! Look how beautifully the sun comes in, making that solid sort of light on the mist of dust at the top."

"And how beautifully it falls on grandpapa's head! I think that grandpapa with little Tom is one of the best parts of the picture, Bee."

"To be sure he is, that noble old head of his, and that beautiful gentle face; and to see him pointing, and soothing the child when he gets frightened at the hubbub, and then enjoying the victories over the poor rats as keenly as anybody!"

"Certainly," said Henrietta, "there is something very odd in man's nature; they can like to do such cruel-sounding things without being cruel! Grandpapa, or Fred, or Uncle Roger, or Alex now, they are as kind and gentle as possible; yet the delight they can take in catching and killing——"

"That is what town-people never can understand," said Beatrice, "that hunting spirit of mankind. I hate above all things to hear it cried down, and the nonsense that is talked about it. I only wish that those people could have seen what I did last summer—grandpapa calling Carey, and holding the ladder for him while he put the young birds into their nest that had fallen out. And O the uproar that there was one day when Dick did something cruel to a poor rabbit; it was two or three years ago, and Alex and Carey set upon him and thrashed him so that they were really punished for it, bad as it was of Dick; it was one of those bursts of generous indignation."

"It is a very curious thing," said Henrietta, "the soldier spirit it must be, I suppose——"

What are you philosophizing about, young ladies?" asked Mr. Langford, coming up as Henrietta said those last words.

"Only about the spirit of the chase, grandpapa," said Beatrice, "what the pleasure can be of the field of slaughter there."

"Something mysterious, you may be sure, young ladies," said grandpapa. "I have hunted rats once or twice a year now these seventy years or more, and I can't say I am tired yet. And there is Master Fred going at it, for the first time in his life, as fiercely as any of us old veterans, and he has a very good eye for a hit, I can tell you, if it is any satisfaction to you. Ha! hoigh Vixen! hoigh Carey! that's it—there he goes!"

"Now, grandpapa," said Beatrice, catching hold of his hand, "I want just to speak to you. Don't you think we might have a little charade-acting on Monday to enliven the evening a little?"

"Eh? what? More charades? Well, they are very pretty sport, only I think they would astonish the natives here a little. Are we to have the end of Shylock?"

"No," said Beatrice, "we never condescend to repeat ourselves. We have a new word and a beauty, and don't you think it will do very well?"

"I am afraid grandmamma will think you are going to take to private theatricals."

"Well, it won't be nearly such regular acting as the last," said Beatrice, "I do not think it would do to take another half-play for so many spectators, but a scene or

two mostly in dumb show would make a very nice diversion. Only say that you consent, grandpapa."

"Well, I don't see any harm in it," said grandpapa, "so long as grandmamma does not mind it. I suppose your mamma does not, Henrietta?"

"Oh, no," said Henrietta, with a certain mental reservation that she would make her not mind it, or at any rate not gainsay it. Fred's calling her affected was enough to make her consent, and bring her mamma to consent to anything; for so little is it really the nature of woman to exercise power, that if she domineers, it is sure to be compensated by some subjection in some other manner; and if Henrietta ruled her mother, she was completely under the dominion of Fred and Beatrice. Themistocles' wife might rule Athens, but she was governed by her son.

After this conversation they went in, and found Aunt Roger very busy recommending servants to Aunt Mary, and grandmamma enforcing all she said. The visit soon came to an end, and they went on to the Pleasance, where the inspection did not prove quite as agreeable as on the first occasion, for grandmamma and Beatrice had very different views respecting the appropriation of the rooms, and poor Mrs. Frederick Langford was harassed and wearied by her vain attempts to accede to the wishes of both, and vex neither. Grandmamma was determined, too, to look over every corner, and discuss every room, and Henrietta, in despair at the fatigue her mother was obliged to go through, kept on seeking in vain for a seat for her, and having at last discovered a broken-backed kitchen chair in some of the regions below, kept diligently carrying it after her in all her peregrinations. She was constantly wishing that Uncle Geoffrey would come, but in vain; and between the long talking at Sutton Leigh, the wandering about the house, and the many discussions, her mamma was completely tired out, and obliged, when they came home, to confess that she had a headache. Henrietta fairly wished her safe at Rocksand.

While Henrietta was attending her mother to her own room, and persuading her to lay up for the evening, Beatrice, whose head was full of but one matter, pursued Mrs. Langford into the study and propounded her grand object. As she fully expected, she met with a flat refusal, and sitting down in her arm-chair, Mrs. Langford very earnestly began with, "Now, listen to me, my dear child," and proceeded with a long story of certain private theatricals some forty years ago, which, to her certain knowledge, ended in a young lady eloping with a music-master. Beatrice set to work to argue: in the first place, it was not probable that either she or Henrietta would run away with

their cousins; secondly, that the former elopement was not chargeable on poor Shakespeare; thirdly, that these were not theatricals at all.

"And pray what are they, then—when you dress yourselves up, and speak the speeches as boldly as Mrs. Siddons, or any of them?"

"You pay us a great compliment," said Beatrice, who could sometimes be pert when alone with grandmamma; and she then went on with her explanation of how very far this was from anything that could be called theatrical; it was the guessing the word, not their acting, that was the important point. The distinction was too fine for grandmamma; it was play-acting, and that was enough for her, and she would not have it done. "But grandpapa liked it, and had given full consent." This was a powerful piece of ordnance which Beatrice had kept in reserve, but at the first moment the shot did not *tell.*

"Ladies were the best judges in such a case as this," said Mrs. Langford, "and let who would consent, she would never have *her* granddaughters standing up, speaking speeches out of Shakespeare, before a whole room full of company."

"Well, then, grandmamma, I'll tell you what—to oblige you, we will not have one single scene out of Shakespeare—not one. Won't that do?"

"You will go to some other play-book, and that is worse," said Mrs. Langford.

"No, no, we will not—we will do every bit out of our own heads, and it shall be almost all Fred and Alex. Henrietta and I will scarcely come in at all. And it will so shorten the evening, and amuse every one so nicely! and grandpapa has said we may."

Mrs. Langford gave a sort of sigh. "Ah, well! you always will have your own way, and I suppose you must; but I never thought to see such things in my house. In my day, young people thought no more of a scheme when their elders had once said, No."

"Yes, only you must not say so, grandmamma. I am sure we would give it up if you did; but pray do not—we will manage very well."

"And put the whole house in a mess, as you did last time; turn everything upside down. I tell you, Beatrice, I can't have it done. I shall want the study to put out the supper in."

"We can dress in our own rooms, then," said Beatrice; "never mind that."

"Well, then, if you will make merry-andrews of yourselves, and your fathers and mothers like to let you, I can't help it—that's all I have to say," said Mrs. Lang-

ford, walking out of the room; while Fred entered from the other side a moment after. "Victory, victory, my dear Fred!" cried Beatrice, darting to meet him in an ecstasy, "I have prevailed; you find me in the hour of victory. The Assassin forever! announced for Monday night, before a select audience!"

"Well, you are an irresistible Queen Bee," said Fred; "why Alex has just been telling me ever so much that his mother told him about grandmamma's dislike to it. I thought the whole concern a gone 'coon, as they say in America."

"I got grandpapa first," said Beatrice, "and then I persuaded her; she told me it would lead to all sorts of mischief, and gave me a long lecture which had nothing to do with it. But I found at last that the chief points which alarmed her were poor Shakespeare and the confusion in the study; so by giving up those two I gained everything."

"You don't mean that you gave up bully Bottom?"

"Yes, I do; but you need not resign your asses' ears. You shall wear them in the character of King Midas."

"I think," said the ungrateful Fred, "that you might as well have given it all up together as Bottom."

"No, no; just think what capabilities there are in Midas. We will decidedly make him King of California, and I'll be the priestess of Apollo; there is an old three-legged epergne-stand that will make a most excellent tripod. And only think of the whispering into the reeds. 'King Midas has the ears of an ass.' I would have made more of a fight for Bottom, if that had not come into my head."

"But you will have nothing to do."

"That helped to conciliate. I promised we girls should appear very little, and for the sake of effect, I had rather Henrietta broke on the world in all her beauty at the end. I do look forward to seeing her as Queen Eleanor; she will look so regal."

Fred smiled, for he delighted in his sister's praises. "You are a wondrous damsel, busy one," said he, "to be content to play second fiddle."

"Second fiddle! As if I were not the great moving spring! Trust me, you would never write yourself down an ass but for the Queen Bee. How shall we ever get your ears from Allonfield? Saturday night, and only till Monday evening to do everything in!"

"Oh, you will do it," said Fred. "I wonder what you and Henrietta cannot do between you! Oh, there is Uncle Geoffrey come in," he exclaimed, as he heard the front door open.

"And I must go and dress," said Beatrice, seized with a sudden haste, which did not speak well for the state of her conscience.

Uncle Geoffrey was in the hall, taking off his mud-bespattered gaiters. "So you are entered with the vermin, Fred," called he, as the two came out of the drawing-room.

"O how we wished for you, Uncle Geoffrey! but how did you hear it?"

"I met Alex just now. Capital sport you must have had. Are you only just come in?"

"No, we were having a consultation about the charades," said Fred; "the higher powers consent to our having them on Monday."

"Grandmamma approving?" asked Uncle Geoffrey.

"Oh, yes," said Fred, in all honesty, "she only objected to our taking a regular scene in a play, and 'coming it as strong' as we did the other night; so it is to be all extemporary, and it will do famously."

Beatrice, who had been waiting in the dark at the top of the stairs, listening, was infinitely rejoiced that the project had been explained so plausibly, and yet in such perfect good faith, and she flew off to dress in high spirits. Had she mentioned it to her father, he would have doubted, taken it as her scheme, and perhaps put a stop to it; but hearing of it from Frederick, whose pleasures were so often thwarted, was likely to make him far more unwilling to object. For its own sake, she knew he had no objection to the sport; it was only for that of his mother, and since he had heard of her as consenting, all was right. No, could Beatrice actually say so to her own secret soul?

She could not; but she could smother that still, small voice that checked her, in a multitude of plans, and projects, and criticisms, and airy castles, and, above all, the pleasure of triumph and dominion, and the resolution was not to yield, and the delight of leading.

CHAPTER XII.

"OUR hearts and all our members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts;" so speaks the collect with which we begin the new year—such the prayer to which the lips of the young Langfords said, "Amen!" but what was its application to them? What did they do with the wicked world in their own guarded homes? There was Uncle Geoffrey: he was in the world. It might be for him to pray for that spirit which enabled him to pass unscathed through the perils of his profession, neither tempted to grasp at the honors nor the wealth which lay in his way,

unhardened and unsoured by the contact of the sin and selfishness on every side. This might indeed be the world. There was Jessie Carey, with her love of dress, and admiration, and pleasure; she should surely pray that she might live less to the vanities of the world; there were others, whose worn countenances spoke of hearts devoted to the cares of the world; but to those fair, fresh, happy young things, early taught how to prize vain pomp and glory, their minds as yet free from anxiety, looking from a safe distance on the busy field of trial and temptation; were not they truly kept from that world which they had renounced?

Alas! that they did not lay to heart that the world is everywhere; that if education had placed them above being tempted by the poorer, cheaper, and more ordinary attractions, yet allurements there were for them also. A pleasure pursued with headlong vehemence because it was of their own devising, love of rule, the spirit of rivalry, the want of submission; these were of the world. Other temptations had not yet reached them, but if they gave way to those which assailed them in their early youth, how could they expect to have strength to bear up against the darker and stronger ones which would meet their riper years?

Even before daylight had fully found its way into Knight Sutton Hall, there was many a note of preparation, and none clearer or louder than those of the charade actors. Beatrice was up long before light, in the midst of her preparations, and it was not long after, as, lamp in hand, she whisked through the passages, Frederick's voice was heard demanding whether the Busy Bee had turned into a firefly, and if the paste was made wherewith Midas was to have his crown stuck with gold paper. Zealous indeed were the workers, and heartily did old Judith wish them anywhere else, as she drove them, their lamps, their paste, and newspaper, from one corner of the study to the other, and, at last, fairly out into the hall, threatening them with what missus would say to them. At last, grandmamma came down with a party of neat little notes in her hand, to be immediately sent off by Martin and the cart to Allonfield, and Martin came to the door leading to the kitchen regions to receive his directions.

"Oh, how lucky!" cried Queen Bee, springing up. "The cotton velvet for the ears. I'll write a note in a second." Then she paused. "But I can't do it without Henrietta; I don't know how much she wants. Half a yard must do, I suppose; but then how to describe it? Half a yard of donkey-colored velvet! It will never do; I must see Henrietta first!"

"Have you not heard her bell?" said Fred.

"No: shall I go and knock at the door? She must be up by this time."

"You had better ask Bennet," said Fred; "she sometimes gets up quietly, and dresses herself without Bennet, if mamma is asleep, because it gives her a palpitation to be disturbed in the morning."

Bennet was shouted for, and proved not to have been into her mistress' room. The charade mania was not strong enough to make them venture upon disturbing Mrs. Frederick Langford, and to their great vexation, Martin departed bearing no commission for the asinine decorations.

About half an hour after, Henrietta made her appearance, as sorry as any one that the opportunity had been lost, more especially as mamma had been broad awake all the time, and the only reason she had not rung the bell was, that she was not ready for Bennet.

As usual, she was called an incorrigible dawdle, and made a humble confession of the same, offering to do all in her power to make up for the morning's laziness. But what would Midas be without his ears?

The best plan that Queen Bee could devise, was, that, whilst Henrietta was engaged with the other preparations, she should walk to Sutton Leigh with Frederick, to dispatch Alexander to Allonfield. No sooner said than done, and off they set, but neither was this plan fated to meet with success; for just as they came in sight of Sutton Leigh, they were hailed by the loud, hearty voice of Roger and beheld him at the head of four brothers, marching off to pay his respects to his aunt Carey, some three miles off. Alex came to hold council at Queen Bee's summons, but he could do nothing for her, for he had that morning been taken to task for not having made a visit to Mrs. Carey, since he came home, and especially ordered off to call upon her before meeting her at the party that evening.

"How abominably provoking!" cried Beatrice; "just as if it signified. If I had but a fairy!"

"Carey!" called Alex, "here! Bee wants to send over to Allonfield; won't you take Dumple, and go?"

"Not I," responded Carey; "I want to walk with Roger. But there's Dumple, let her go herself."

"What, ride him?" asked Beatrice; "thank you, Carey."

"Fred might drive you," said Carey; "O no, poor fellow, I suppose he does not know how."

Fred colored with anger. "I do," said he; "I have often driven our own horses."

"Ay," said Beatrice, "with the coachman sitting by you, and Aunt Mary little guessing what you were doing."

"I assure you, queen," said Fred, very earnestly. "I do really know how to drive, and if we may have the gig, and

you will trust yourself with me, I will bring you home quite safe."

"I know you can have the gig," said Carey, "for papa offered it to Roger and Alex this morning; only we chose all to walk together. To think of doubting whether to drive old Dumple!"

"I don't question," said Fred; "I only want to know if Busy Bee will go. I won't break your neck, I promise you."

Beatrice was slightly mistrustful, and had some doubts about Aunt Mary, but poor Alex did much to decide her, though intending quite the reverse.

"I don't advise you, Bee," said he.

"Oh, as to that," said she, pleased to see that he disliked the plan, "I have great faith in Dumple's experience, and I can sit tight in a chay, as the boy said to grandpapa when he asked him if he could ride. My chief doubt is about Aunt Mary."

Fred's successful disobedience in the matter of skating had decidedly made him less scrupulous about showing open disregard of his mother's desires, and he answered in a certain superior, patronizing manner, "Oh, you know I only give way sometimes, because she does make herself so intensely miserable about me; but as she will be spared all that now, by knowing nothing about it, I don't think it need be considered."

Beatrice recollected what her father had said, but eluded it the next moment, by replying to herself, that no commands had been given in this case.

Alex stood fumbling with the button of his great-coat, looking much annoyed, and saying nothing; Roger called out to him that they could not wait all day, and he exerted himself to take Beatrice by the arm, and say, "Bee, I wish you would not, I am sure there will be a blow-up about it at home."

"O, you think nobody can or may drive me but yourself, Master Alex," said Beatrice, laughing. "No, no, I know very well that nobody will care when it is done, and there are no commands one way or the other. I love my own neck, I assure you, Alex, and will not get that into a scrape. Come, if that will put you into a better humor, I'll dance with you first to-night."

Alex turned away, muttering, "I don't like it—I'd go myself, but—— Well, I shall speak to Fred."

Beatrice smiled with triumph at the jealousy which she thought she had excited, and watched to see the effect of the remonstrance.

"You are sure now," said he, "that you can drive safely?

Remember it would be a tolerable piece of work if you were to damage that little Bee."

This eloquent expostulation might have had some weight, if it had come from any one else; but Fred was too much annoyed at the superiority of his rival to listen with any patience, and he replied rather sullenly, that he could take as good care of her as Alex himself, and he only wished that their own horses were come from Rocksand.

"Well, I have no more to say," said Alex, "only please to mind this, Langford junior, you may do just as you please with our horse, drive him to Jericho for what I care. It was for your own sake and Beatrice's that I spoke."

"Much obliged, Langford senior," replied Fred, making himself as tall as he could, and turning round to Carey with a very different tone, "Now, Carey, "we won't stop you any longer, if you'll only just be so good as to tell your man to get out the gig."

Carey did so, and Beatrice and Frederick were left alone, but not long, for Uncle Roger presently came into the yard, with Willy and Arthur running after him. To take possession of his horse and carriage, in his very sight, without permission, was quite impossible, and, besides, Beatrice knew full well that her dexterity could obtain a sanction from him, which might be made to parry all blame. So, tripping up to him, she explained in a droll manner the distress in which the charade actors stood, and how the boys had said that they might have Dumple to drive to Allonfield. Good-natured Uncle Roger, who did not see why Fred should not drive as well as Alex or any of his other boys, knew little or nothing of his sister-in-law's fears, and would, perhaps, have taken Fred's side of the question if he had, did exactly as she intended, declared them perfectly welcome to the use of Dumple, and sent Willy into the house for the driving whip. Thus authorized, Beatrice did not fear even her father, who was not likely to allow in words what a nonentity the authority of Uncle Roger might really be esteemed.

Willy came back with a shilling in his hand, and an entreaty that he might go with Queen Bee and Fred, to buy a cannon for the little ships, of which Roger's return always produced a whole fleet at Sutton Leigh. His cousins were in a triumphant temper of good nature, and willingly consenting, he was perched between them; but for one moment Beatrice's complacency was diminished, as Uncle Roger called out, "Ha! Fred, take care! What are you doing? You'll be against the gate-post. Don't bring his head so short round. If you don't take more care, you'll certainly come to a smash before you get home."

If honor and credit had not been concerned, both

Beatrice and Frederick would probably have been much better satisfied to have given up their bold design after this *debut*, but they were far too much bent on their own way to yield, and Fred's pride would never have allowed him to acknowledge that he felt himself unequal to the task he had so rashly undertaken. Uncle Roger, believing it to be only carelessness instead of ignorance, and too much used to dangerous undertakings of his own boys to have many anxieties on their account, let them go on without further question, and turned off to visit his young wheat without the smallest uneasiness respecting the smash he had predicted, as he had done, by way of warning, at least twenty times before.

Busy Bee was in that stage of girlhood which is very sensible on some points, in the midst of great folly upon others, and she was quite wise enough to let Fred alone, to give full attention to his driving all the way to Allonfield. Dumple knew perfectly well what was required of him, and went on at a very steady well-behaved pace, up the hill, across the common, and into the town, where, leaving him at the inn, they walked into the street, and Beatrice, after an infinity of searching, succeeding in obtaining certain gray cotton velvet, which, though Fred asserted that donkeys had a tinge of lilac, was certainly not unfit to represent their color. As Fred's finances were in a much more flourishing state since New Year's Day, he proceeded to delight the very heart of Willy, by a present of a pair of little brass cannon, on which his longing eyes had often before been fixed, and they then returned to the carriage, in some dismay on perceiving that it was nearly one o'clock.

"We must go straight home," said Beatrice, "or this velvet will be of no use. There is no time to drive to Sutton Leigh and walk from thence."

Unfortunately, however, there was an influential personage, who was by no means willing to consent to this arrangement, namely, Dumple, who, well aware that an inexperienced hand held the reins, was privately determined that his nose should not be turned away from the shortest road to his own stable.

As soon, therefore, as he came to the turning toward Sutton Leigh, he made a decided dash in that direction. Fred pulled him sharply, and a little nervously; the horse resisted; Fred gave him a cut with the whip, but Dumple felt that he had the advantage, and, replying with a demonstration of kicking, suddenly whisked round the corner, and set off over the rough, jolting road at a pace very like running away. Fred pulled hard, but the horse went the faster. He stood up. "Sit still," cried Beatrice, now speaking for the first time, "the gate will stop him;" but

ere the words were uttered, Frederick, whether by a movement of his own or the rapid motion of the carriage, she knew not, was thrown violently to the ground; and as she was whirled on, she saw him no more. Instinct, rather than presence of mind, made her hold fast to the carriage with one hand, and throw the other arm round little Willy, to prevent him from being thrown out, as they were shaken from side to side by the ruts and stones over which they were jolted. A few minutes more, and their way was barred by a gate—that which she had spoken of—the horse, used to stopping there, slackened his pace and stood still, looking over it as if nothing had happened.

Trembling in every limb, Beatrice stood safely on the ground, and Willy beside her. Without speaking, she hurried back to seek for Fred, her steps swifter than they had ever before been, though to herself it seemed as if her feet were of lead, and the very throbbing of her heart dragged her back. In every bush she fancied she saw Fred coming to meet her, but it was only for a moment, and at length she saw him but too plainly. He was stretched at full length on the ground, senseless—motionless. She sunk rather than knelt down beside him, and called him; but not a token was there that he heard her. She lifted his hand, it fell powerless, and clasping her own, she sat in an almost unconscious state of horror, till roused by little Willy, who asked in a terrified, breathless whisper:

"Bee, is he dead?"

"No, no, no," cried she, as if she could frighten away her own fears; "he is only stunned. He is—he must be alive. He will come to himself. Help me to lift him up—here—that is it—his head on my lap——"

"O the blood!" said Willy, recoiling in increased fear, as he saw it streaming from one or two deep cuts and bruises on the side of the face.

"That is not the worst," said Beatrice. "There—hold him toward the wind." She raised his head, untied his handkerchief, and hung over him; but there was not a sound, not a breath; his head sunk a dead weight on her knee. She locked her hands together, and gazed round wildly for help; but no one all over the wide, lonely common could be seen, except Willy, who stood helplessly looking at her.

"Aunt Mary! O Aunt Mary!" cried she, in a tone of the bitterest anguish of mind. "Fred—dear, dear Freddy, open your eyes, answer me! Oh, only speak to me! O what shall I do?"

"Pray to GOD," whispered Willy.

"You—you—Willy; I can't—it was my doing. O Aunt Mary!" A few moments passed in silence, then she ex-

claimed, "What are we doing here? Willy, you must go and call them. The Hall is nearest; go through the plantation as fast as you can. Go to papa in the study; if he is not there, find grandpapa—any one but Aunt Mary. Mind, Willy, don't let her hear it, it would kill her. Go, fly! You understand—any one but Aunt Mary."

Greatly relieved at being sent out of the sight of that senseless form, Willy required no second bidding, but rushed off at a pace which bade fair to bring him to the Hall in very brief space. Infinite were the ramifications of thought that now began to chase each other over the surface of her mind, as she sat supporting her cousin's head, all clear and distinct, yet all overshadowed by that agony of suspense which made her sit as if she was all eye and ear, watching for the slightest motion, the faintest sound, that hope might seize as a sign of life. She wiped away the blood which was streaming from the cuts in the face, and softly laid her trembling hand to seek for some trace of a blow amid the fair shining hair; she felt the pulse, but she could not satisfy herself whether it beat or not; she rubbed the cold hand between both her own, and again and again started with the hope that the long black eyelashes were being lifted from the white cheek, or that she saw a quivering of lip or nostril. All this while her thoughts were straying miles away, and yet so wondrously and painfully present.

As she thought of her Uncle Frederick, and, as it were, realized his death, which had happened so nearly in this same manner, she experienced a sort of heart-sinking which would almost make her believe in a fate on the family. And that Fred should be cut off in the midst of an act of disobedience, and she the cause! O thought beyond endurance! She tried to pray for him, for herself, for her aunt, but no prayer would come; and suddenly she found her mind pursuing Willy, following him through all the gates and gaps, entering the garden, opening the study door, seeing her father's sudden start, hearing poor Henrietta's cry, devising how it would be broken to her aunt, and again, the misery of recollecting *her* overpowered her, and she gave a groan, the very sound of which thrilled her with the hope that Fred was reviving, and made her, if possible, watch with double intenseness, and then utter a desponding sigh. She wished it was she who lay there, unconscious of such exceeding wretchedness, and, strange to say, her imagination began to devise all that would be said were it really so; what all her acquaintance would say of the little Queen Bee, how soon Matilda St. Leger would forget her, how long Henrietta would cherish the thought of her, how deeply and silently Alex would grieve.

"He would be a son to papa," she thought; but then came a picture of her home, her father and mother without their only one, and tears came into her eyes, which she brushed away, almost smiling at the absurdity of crying for her own imagined death, instead of weeping over this but too positive and present distress.

There was nothing to interrupt her; Fred lay as lifeless as before, and not a creature passed along the lonely road. The frosty air was perfectly still, and through it sounded the barking of dogs, the tinkle of the sheep-bell, the woodman's ax in the plantations, and now and then the rattle of Dumple's harness as he shook his head or shifted his feet at the gate where he had been left standing. The rooks wheeled over her head in a clear blue sky, the little birds answered each other from the high furze-bushes, and the pewits came careering near her with their broad wings, floating movement, and long, melancholy note-like lamentation.

At length, far away, there sounded on the hard turnpike road a horse's tread, coming nearer and nearer. Help was at hand! Be it who it might, some human sympathy would be with her, and that most oppressive solitude, which seemed to have lasted for years instead of minutes, would be relieved. In almost an agony of nervousness lest the new-comer might pass by, she gently laid her cousin's head on the grass, and flew rather than ran toward the opening of the lane. She was too late, the horseman had passed, but she recognized the shining hat, the form of the shoulders, and with a scream almost wild in its energy, she called: "Philip! Oh, Philip Carey!"

Joy, joy! he looked back, he turned his horse, and came up in amazement at finding her there, and asking questions which she could only answer by leading the way down the lane.

In another moment he was off his horse, and she could almost have adored him when she heard him pronounce that Frederick lived.

A few moments passed whilst he was handling his patient, and asking questions, when Beatrice beheld some figures advancing from the plantation. She dashed through the heath and furze to meet them, sending her voice before her with the good news: "He is alive! Philip Carey says he is alive!" and with these words she stood before her father and her Aunt Mary.

Her aunt seemed neither to see nor hear her; but with a face as white and still as a marble figure, hastened on. Mr. Geoffrey Langford stopped for an instant and looked at her with an expression such as she never could forget. "Beatrice, my child!" he exclaimed, "you are hurt!"

"No, no, papa." she cried. "It is Fred's blood—I am quite, quite safe!"

He held her in his arms, pressed her close to him, and kissed her brow, with a whispered exclamation of fervent thankfulness. Beatrice could never remember that moment without tears; the tone, the look, the embrace—all had revealed to her the fervor of her father's affection, beyond—far beyond all that she had ever imagined. It was but for one instant that he thus gave way; the next, he was hastening on, and stood beside Frederick as soon as his sister-in-law.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE drawing-room at Knight Sutton Hall was in that state of bustle incidental to the expectation of company, which was sure to prevail wherever Mrs. Langford reigned. She walked about, removing the covers from chairs and ottomans, shaking out curtains, adjusting china, and appealing to Mrs. Frederick Langford in various matters of taste, though never allowing her to move or assist her. Henrietta, however, often came to her help, and was certainly acting in a way to incur the severe displeasure of the absent queen, by laying aside Midas' robes to assist in the arrangements. "That picture is crooked, I am sure!" said Mrs. Langford; and of course she was not satisfied till she had summoned Geoffrey from the study to give his opinion, and had made him mount upon a chair to settle its position. In the midst of the operation, in walked Uncle Roger.

"Hollo! Geoffrey, what are you up to now? So, ma'am, you are making yourself smart to-day. Where is my father?"

"He has ridden over to see the South Farm," said Mrs. Langford.

"Oho! got out of the way of the beautifying—I understand."

"Have you seen anything of Fred and Busy Bee?" asked Mrs. Frederick Langford. "They went out directly after breakfast to walk to Sutton Leigh, and I have not seen them since."

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Roger Langford, "I can tell you what has become of them; they are gone to Allonfield. I have just seen them off in the gig, and Will with them, after some of their acting affairs."

Good, easy man; he little thought what a thunder-clap was this intelligence. Uncle Geoffrey turned round on his elevation to look him full in the face; every shade of color

left the countenance of Mrs. Frederick Langford. Henrietta let her work fall, and looked up in dismay.

"You don't mean that Fred was driving?" said her mother.

"Yes, I do! Why, my boys can drive long before they are that age—sure he knows how!"

"Oh, Roger, what have you done?" said she, faintly, as if the exclamation would break from her in spite of herself.

"Indeed, mamma," said Henrietta, alarmed at her paleness, "I assure you Fred has often told me how he has driven our own horses when he was sitting up by Dawson."

"Ay, ay, Mary," said Uncle Roger, "never fear. Depend upon it, boys do many and many a thing that mammas never guess at, and come out with whole bones after all."

Henrietta, meantime, was attentively watching Uncle Geoffrey's face, in hopes of discovering what he thought of the danger; but she could learn nothing, for he kept his features as composed as possible.

"I do believe those children are gone crazy about their acting," said Mrs. Langford; "and how Mr. Langford can encourage them in it I cannot think. So silly of Bee to go off in this way, when she might just as well have sent by Martin!" And her head being pretty much engrossed with her present occupation, she went out to obey a summons from the kitchen, without much perception of the consternation that prevailed in the drawing-room.

"Did you know they were going, Henrietta?" asked Uncle Geoffrey, rather sternly.

"No! I thought they meant to send Alex. But—— Uncle, do you think there is any danger?" exclaimed she, losing self-control in the infection of fear caught from the mute terror which she saw her mother struggling to overcome. Her mother's inquiring, imploring glance followed her question.

"Foolish children!" said Uncle Geoffrey, "I am very much vexed with the Bee for her willfulness about this scheme, but as for the rest, there is hardly a steadier animal than old Dumple, and he is pretty well used to young hands."

Henrietta thought him quite satisfied, and even her mother was in some degree tranquilized, and would have been more so, had not Mr. Roger Langford begun to reason with her in the following style: "Come, Mary, you need not be in the least alarmed. It is quite nonsense in you. You know a boy of any spirit will always be doing things that sound imprudent. I would not give a farthing for

Fred if he was always to be the mamma's boy you would make him. He is come to an age now when you cannot keep him up in that way, and he must get knocked about some time or other."

"Oh, yes, I know I am very foolish," said she, trying to smile.

"I shall send up Elizabeth to talk to you," said Uncle Roger. "She would have a pretty life of it if she went into such a state as you do on all such occasions."

"Enough to break the heart of ten horses, as they say in Ireland," said Uncle Geoffrey, seeing that the best chance for her was to appear at his ease, and divert her brother's attention. "And by the bye, Roger, you never told me if you heard any more of your poor Irish hay-makers."

"Why, Geoffrey, you have an absent fit now for once in your life," said his brother. "Are you the man to ask if I heard any more of them, when you yourself gave me a sovereign to send them in the famine?"

Uncle Geoffrey, however, persevered, and finally succeeded in starting Uncle Roger upon his favorite and inexhaustible subject of the doings at the Allonfield Union. During this time Mrs. Frederick Langford put a few stitches into her work, found it would not do, and paused, stood up, seemed to be observing the new arrangements in the room—then took a long look out of the window, and at last left the room. Henrietta ran after her to assure her that she was convinced that Uncle Geoffrey was not alarmed, and to beg her to set her mind at rest. "Thank you, my dear," said she. "I—no, I really—you know how foolish I am, my dear, and I think I had rather be alone. Don't stay here and frighten yourself, too; this is only my usual fright, and it will be better if I am left alone. Go down, my dear, think about something else, and let me know when they come home."

With considerable reluctance Henrietta was obliged to obey, and descended to the drawing-room, where the first words that met her ears were from Uncle Roger. "Well, I wish, with all my heart, they were safe at home again. But do you mean to say, Geoffrey, that I ought not to have let them go?"

"I shall certainly come upon you for damages, if he breaks the neck of little Bee," said Uncle Geoffrey.

"If I had guessed it," said Uncle Roger; "but then, you know, any of my boys would think nothing of driving Dumple—even Dick I have trusted—and they came up—you should have seen them—as confidently as if he had been driving four-in-hand every day of his life. Upon my word,

your daughter has a tolerable spirit of her own, if she knew that he could not drive."

"A tolerable spirit of self-will," said Uncle Geoffrey, with a sigh. "But did you see them off?—how did they manage?"

"Ah! why there, I must confess, I was to blame," said his brother. "They did clear out of the yard after a strange fashion, certainly, and I might have questioned a little closer. But never mind, 'tis all straight road. I would lay any wager they will all come back safe—boys always do."

Uncle Geoffrey smiled, but Henrietta thought it a very bad sign that he, too, looked out at the window; and the confidence founded on his tranquillity deserted her.

Uncle Roger forthwith returned to the fighting o'er again of his battles at the Board of Guardians, and Henrietta was able to get to the window, where for some ten minutes she sat, and at length exclaimed with a start: "Here is Willy running across the paddock!"

"All right!" said Uncle Roger, "they must have stopped at Sutton Leigh."

"It is the opposite way," said Mr. Geoffrey Langford, who at the same moment stepped up to the window. Henrietta's heart throbbed fearfully as she saw how wearied was the boy's running, and yet how rapid. She could hardly stand as she followed her uncles to the hall. Her mother at the same moment came down-stairs, and all together met the little boy as, breathless, exhausted, unable to speak, he rushed into the hall and threw himself upon his father, leaning his head against him and clinging as if he could not stand.

"Why, Will, how now, my boy? have you been racing?" said his father, kneeling on one knee, and supporting the poor little wearied fellow, as he almost lay upon his breast and shoulder. "What is the matter now?"

There was a deep silence, only interrupted by the deep pantings of the boy. Henrietta leaned on the balusters, giddy with suspense. Uncle Geoffrey stepped into the dining-room, and brought back a glass of wine and some water. Aunt Mary parted the damp hair that hung over his forehead, laid her cold hand on it, and said: "Poor little fellow!"

At her voice Willy looked up, clung faster to his father, and whispered something unintelligible.

"What? Has anything happened? What is the matter?" were questions anxiously asked, while Uncle Geoffrey in silence succeeded in administering the wine; after which Willy managed to say, pointing to his aunt, "Don't —tell—her."

It was with a sort of ghastly composure that she leaned over him, saying, "Don't be afraid, my dear, I am ready to hear it."

He raised himself, and gazed at her in perplexity and wonder. Henrietta's violently throbbing heart took from her almost the perception of what was passing.

"Take breath, Willy," said his father; "don't keep us all anxious."

"Bee said I was to tell Uncle Geoffrey," said the boy.

"Is *she* safe?" asked Aunt Mary earnestly.

"Yes."

"Thanks to GOD," said she, holding out her hand to Uncle Geoffrey, with a look of relief and congratulation, and yet of inexpressible mournfulness which went to his heart.

"And Fred?" said Uncle Roger.

"Do not ask, Roger," said she, still as calmly as before; "I always knew how it would be."

Henrietta tried to exclaim, to inquire, but her lips would not frame one word, her tongue would not leave the roof of her mouth. She heard a few confused sounds, and then a mist came over her eyes, a rushing of waters in her ears, and she sunk on the ground in a fainting fit. When she came to herself she was lying on the sofa in the drawing-room, and all was still.

"Mamma!" said she.

"Here, dear child"—but it was Mrs. Langford's voice.

"Mamma!" again said she. "Where is mamma? Where are they all? Why does the room turn round?"

"You have not been well, my dear," said her grandmother; "but drink this, and lie still, you will soon be better."

"Where is mamma?" repeated Henrietta, gazing round and seeing no one but Mrs. Langford and Bennet. "Was she frightened at my being ill? Tell her I am better."

"She knows it, my dear; lie still, and try to go to sleep."

"But weren't there a great many people?" said Henrietta. "Were we not in the hall? Did not Willy come? Oh, grandmamma, grandmamma, do tell me, where are mamma and Fred?"

"They will soon be here, I hope."

"But, grandmamma," cried she, vehemently, turning herself round as clearer recollection returned, "something has happened—oh! what has happened to Fred?"

"Nothing very serious, we hope, my dear," said Mrs. Langford. "It was Willy who frightened you. Fred has had a fall, and your mamma and uncles are gone to see about him."

"A fall! Oh, tell me, tell me! I am sure it is something dreadful! Oh, tell me all about it, grandmamma, is he much hurt? Oh, Freddy, Freddy!"

With more quietness than could have been anticipated from so active and bustling a nature, Mrs. Langford gradually told her granddaughter all that she knew, which was but little, as she had been in attendance on her, and had only heard the main fact of Willy's story. Henrietta clasped her hands wildly together in an agony of grief. "He is killed—he is, I'm sure of it!" said she. "Why do you not tell me so?"

"My dear, I trust and believe that he is only stunned."

"No, no, no! papa was killed in that way, and I am sure he is! O, Fred, Fred, my own dear, dear brother, my only one! O, I cannot bear it! O, Fred!"

She rose up from the sofa, and walked up and down the room in an ecstasy of sorrow. "And it was I that helped to bring him here! It was my doing! O, my own, my dearest, my twin brother! I cannot live without him!"

"Henrietta," said Mrs. Langford, "you do not know what you are saying; you must bear the will of God, be it what it may."

"I can't, I can *not*," repeated Henrietta; "if I am to lose him I can't live; I don't care for anything without Fred!"

"Your mother, Henrietta."

"Mamma! O, don't speak of her; she would die; I am sure she would, without him; and then I should too, for I should have nothing."

Henrietta's grief was the more ungovernable that it was chiefly selfish; there was little thought of her mother—little, indeed, for anything but the personal loss to herself. She hid her face in her hands, and sobbed violently, though without a tear, while Mrs. Langford vainly tried to make her hear of patience and resignation, turning away, and saying, "I can't be patient—no, I can't!" and then again repeating her brother's name with all the fondest terms of endearment.

Then came a sudden change; it was possible that he yet lived—and she became certain that he had been only stunned for a moment, and required her grandmamma to be so too. Mrs. Langford, at the risk of a cruel disappointment, was willing to encourage her hope; but Henrietta, fancying herself treated like a petted child, chose to insist on being told really and exactly what was her view of the case. Then she was urgent to go out and meet the others, and learn the truth; but this Mrs. Langford would not permit. It was in kindness to spare her some fearful sight, which might shock and startle her, but Henrietta

was far from taking it so; her habitual want of submission made itself felt in spite of her usual gentleness, now that she had been thrown off her balance, and she burst into a passionate fit of weeping.

In such a dreadful interval of suspense, her conduct was, perhaps, scarcely under her own control; and it is scarcely just to mention it as a subject of blame. But be it remembered that it was the effect of a long previous selfishness and self-will; quiet, amiable selfishness; gentle, caressing self-will; but no less real, and more perilous and deceitful. But for this, Henrietta would have thought more of her mother, prepared for her comfort, and braced herself in order to be a support to her; she would have remembered how terrible must be the shock to her grandmother in her old age, and how painful must be the remembrances thus excited of the former bereavement; and in the attempt to console her, the sense of her own sorrow would have been in some degree relieved; whereas she now seemed to forget that Frederick was anything to any one but herself. She prayed, but it was one wild repetition of "Oh, give him back to me! save his life! let him be safe and well!" She had no room for any other entreaty; she did not call for strength and resignation on the part of herself and her mother, for whatever might be appointed; she did not pray that his life might be granted only if it was for his good: she could ask nothing but that *her* own beloved brother might be spared to *herself*, and she ended her prayer as unsubdued, and therefore as miserable, as when she began it.

The first intelligence that arrived was brought by Uncle Roger and Beatrice, who, rather to their surprise, came back in the gig, and greatly relieved their minds with the intelligence of Frederick's life, and of Philip Carey's arrival. Henrietta had sprung eagerly up on their first entrance, with parted lips and earnest eyes, and listened to their narration with trembling, throbbing hope, but with scarcely a word; and when she heard that Fred still lay senseless and motionless, she again turned away, and hid her face on the arm of the sofa, without one look at Beatrice, reckless of the pang that shot through the heart of one fresh from that trying watch over her brother. Beatrice longed for one word, one kiss, and looked wistfully at the long veil of half uncurled ringlets that floated over the crossed arms on which her forehead rested, and meantime submitted with a kind of patient indifference to her grandmother's cares, drank hot wine and water, sat by the fire, and finally was sent up-stairs to change her dress. Too restless, too anxious, too wretched to stay there alone, longing for some interchange of sympathy—but her mind

too turbid with agitation to seek it where it would surely have been found—she hastened down again. Grandmamma was busied in giving directions for the room which was being prepared for Fred; Uncle Roger had walked out to meet those who were conveying him home; and Henrietta was sitting in the window, her forehead resting against the glass, watching intently for their arrival.

"Are they coming?" asked Beatrice, anxiously.

"No!" was all the answer, hardly uttered, and without looking round, as if her cousin's entrance was perfectly indifferent to her. Beatrice went up and stood by her, looking out for a few minutes; then taking the hand that lay in her lap, she said in an imploring whisper, "Henrietta, you forgive me?"

The hand lay limp and listless in hers, and Henrietta scarcely raised her face as she answered, in a low, languid, dejected voice, "Of course, Bee; only I am so wretched. Don't talk to me."

Her head sunk again, and Beatrice stepped hastily back to the fire, with a more bitter feeling than she had ever known. This was no forgiveness; it was worse than anger or reproach; it was a repulse, and that when her whole heart was yearning to relieve the pent-up oppression that almost choked her by weeping with her. She leaned her burning forehead on the cool marble chimney-piece, and longed for her mother—longed for her almost as much for her papa's, her aunt Mary's, and her grandmother's sake, as for her own. But oh! what an infinite relief would one talk with her have been! She turned toward the table, and thought of writing to her, but her hand was trembling—every pulse throbbing; she could not even sit still enough to make the attempt.

At last she saw Henrietta spring to her feet, and hastening to the window beheld the melancholy procession; Fred carried on a mattress by Uncle Geoffrey and three of the laborers, Philip Carey walking at one side, and on the other Mrs Frederick Langford leaning on Uncle Roger's arm.

Both girls hurried out to meet them, but all attention was at that moment for the patient, as he was carried in on the mattress, and deposited for a few minutes on the large hall table. Henrietta pushed between her uncles, and made her way up to him, unconscious of the presence of any one else—even of her mother—while she clasped his hand, and hanging over him looked with an agonized intensity at his motionless features. The next moment she felt her mother's hand on her shoulder, and was forced to turn round and look into her face—the sweet, mournful meekness of which came for a moment like a

soft cooling breeze upon the dry burning desert of her grief.

"My poor child," said the gentle voice.

"O mamma, is—is——?" She could not speak; her face was violently agitated, and the very muscles of her throat quivered.

"They hope for the best, my dear," was the reply; but both Mr. Geoffrey Langford and Beatrice distinguished her own hopelessness in the intonation, and the very form of the expression; whereas Henrietta only took in and eagerly seized the idea of comfort which it was intended to convey to her. She would have inquired more, but Mrs. Langford was telling her mother of the arrangements she had made, and entreating her to take some rest.

"Thank you, ma'am—thank you very much indeed—you are very kind; I am very sorry to give so much trouble," were her answers; and simple as were the words, there was a whole world of truth and reality in them.

Preparations were now made for carrying Fred upstairs, but even at that moment Aunt Mary was not without thought for Beatrice, who was retreating, as if she feared to be as much in her way as she had been in Henrietta's.

"I did not see you before, Queenie," said she, holding out her hand and kissing her; "you have gone through more than any one."

A thrill of fond, grateful affection brought the tears into Queen Bee's eyes. How much there was even in the pronunciation of that pet, playful name to touch her heart, and fill it to overflowing with love and contrition! She longed to pour out her whole confession, but there was no one to attend to her—the patient occupied the whole attention of all. He was carried to his mother's room, placed in bed, and again examined by young Mr. Carey, who pronounced with increased confidence that there was no fracture, and gave considerable hopes of improvement. While this was passing, Henrietta sat on the upper step of the stairs, her head on her hands, scarcely moving or answering when addressed. As evening twilight began to close in, the surgeon left the room, and went down to make his report to those who were anxiously awaiting it in the drawing-room; and she took advantage of his exit to come to the door, and beg to be let in.

Uncle Geoffrey admitted her, and her mother, who was sitting by the bedside, held out her hand. Henrietta came up to her, and at first stood by her, intently watching her brother; then after a time sat down on a footstool, and, with her head resting on her mother's lap, gave herself up to a sort of quiet, heavy dream, which might be called the

very luxury of grief. Uncle Geoffrey sat by the fire, watching his sister-in-law even more anxiously than the patient, and thus a considerable interval passed in complete silence, only broken by the crackling of the fire, the ticking of the watches, or some slight change of posture of one or other of the three nurses. At last the stillness was interrupted by a little movement among the bedclothes, and with a feeling like transport, Henrietta saw the hand, which had hitherto lain so still and helpless, stretched somewhat out, and the head turned upon the pillow. Uncle Geoffrey stood up, and Mrs. Frederick Langford pressed her daughter's hand with a sort of convulsive tremor. A faint voice murmured "Mamma!" and while a flush of trembling joy illumined her pale face, she bent over him, answering him eagerly and fondly, but he did not seem to know her, and again repeating "mamma," opened his eyes with a vacant gaze, and tried in vain to express some complaint.

In a short time, however, he regained a partial degree of consciousness. He knew his mother, and was continually calling to her, as if for the sake of feeling her presence, but without recognizing any other person, not even his sister or his uncle. Henrietta stood gazing sadly upon him, while his mother hung over him, soothing his restlessness, and answering his half-uttered complaints, and Uncle Geoffrey was ever ready with assistance and comfort to each in turn, as it was needed, and especially supporting his sister-in-law with that sense of protection and reliance so precious to a sinking heart.

Aunt Roger came up to announce that dinner was ready, and to beg that she might stay with Fred while the rest went down. Mrs. Frederick Langford only shook her head, and thanked her, saying with a painful smile that it was impossible, but begging Uncle Geoffrey and Henrietta to go. The former complied, knowing how much alarm his absence would create down-stairs; but Henrietta declared that she could not bear the thoughts of going down, and it was only by a positive order that he succeeded in making her come with him. Grandpapa kissed her, and made her sit by him, and grandmamma loaded her plate with all that was best on the table, but she looked at it with disgust, and leaning back in her chair, faintly begged not to be asked to eat.

Uncle Geoffrey poured out a glass of wine, and said, in a tone which startled her by its unwonted severity, "This will not do, Henrietta; I cannot allow you to add to your mamma's troubles by making yourself ill. I desire you will eat, as you certainly can."

Every one was taken by surprise, and perhaps Mrs

Langford might have interfered, but for a sign from grandpapa. Henrietta, with a feeling of being cruelly treated, silently obeyed; swallowed down the wine, and having done so, found herself capable of making a very tolerable dinner, by which she was greatly revived and refreshed.

Uncle Geoffrey said a few cheering words to his father and mother, and returned to Fred's room as soon as he could, without giving that appearance of hurry and anxiety which would have increased their alarm. Henrietta, without the same thoughtfulness, rushed rather than ran after him, and neither of the two came down again to tea.

Philip Carey was to stay all night, and though Beatrice was of course very glad that he should do so, yet she was much harassed by the conversation kept up with him for civility's sake. She had been leading a forlorn, dreary life all the afternoon, busy first in helping grandmamma to write notes to be sent to the intended guests, and afterward, with a feeling of intense disgust, putting out of sight all the preparations for their own self-chosen sport. She desired quiet, and yet when she found it, it was unendurable, and to talk to the father or grandfather would be a great relief, yet the first beginning might well be dreaded. Neither of them was forthcoming, and now in the evening to hear the quiet, grave discussion of Allonfield gossip was excessively harassing and irritating. No one spoke for their own pleasure, the thoughts of all were elsewhere, and they only talked thus for the sake of politeness; but she gave them no credit for this, and felt fretted and wearied beyond bearing. Even this, however, was better than when they did return to the engrossing thought, and spoke of the accident, requiring of her a more exact and particular account of it. She hurried over it. Grandmamma praised her, and each word was a sting.

"But, my dear," said Mrs. Roger Langford, "what could have made you so anxious to go to Allonfield?"

"O, Aunt Roger, it was very——" but here Beatrice, whose agitated spirits made her particularly accessible to momentary emotion, was seized with such a sense of the absurdity of undertaking so foolish an expedition, with no other purpose than going to buy a pair of ass' ears, and she was overpowered by a violent fit of laughing. Grandmamma and Aunt Roger, after looking at her in amazement for a moment, both darted up and came toward her with looks of alarm that set her off again still more uncontrollably. She struggled to speak, but that only made it worse, and when she perceived that she was supposed to be hysterical, she laughed the more, though the laughter was positive pain. Once she for a moment succeeded in recovering some degree of composure, but every kind de-

monstration of solicitude brought on a fresh access of laughter, and a certain whispering threat of calling Philip Carey was worse than all. When, however, Aunt Roger was actually setting off for the purpose, the dread of his coming had a salutary effect, and enabled her to make a violent effort, by which she composed herself, and at length sat quite still, except for the trembling, which she could not control.

Grandmamma and Aunt Roger united in ordering her to bed, but she could not bear to go without seeing her papa, nor would she accept Mrs. Langford's offer of calling him; and at last a compromise was made that she should go up to bed, on condition that her papa should come and visit her when he came out of Fred's room. Her grandmamma came up with her, helped her to undress, gave her the unwonted indulgence of a fire, and summoned Judith to prepare things as quickly and quietly as possible for Henrietta, who was to sleep with her that night. It was with much difficulty that she could avoid making a promise to go to bed immediately, and not to get up to breakfast. At last, with a very affectionate kiss, grandmamma left her to brush her hair, an operation which she resolved to lengthen out until her papa's visit.

It was long before he came, but at last his step was heard along the passage, his knock was at her door. She flew to it, and stood before him, her large black eyes looking larger, brighter, blacker than usual, from the contrast with the pale or rather sallow face, and the white nightcap and dressing-gown.

"How is Fred?" asked she, as well as her parched tongue would allow her to speak.

"Much the same, only talking a little more. But why are you up still? Your grandmamma said——"

"Never mind, papa," interrupted she, "only tell me this—is Fred in danger?"

"You have heard all we can tell, my dear——"

Beatrice interrupted him by an impatient, despairing look, and clasped her hands: "I know—I know; but what do *you* think?"

"My own impression is, said her father, in a calm, kind, yet almost reproving tone, as if to warn her to repress her agitation, "that there is no reason to give up hope, although it is impossible as yet to ascertain the extent of the injury."

Beatrice retreated a step or two; she stood by the table, one hand upon it, as if for support, yet her figure quite erect, her eyes fixed on his face, and her voice firm, though husky, as she said, slowly and quietly, "Papa, if Fred dies, it is my doing."

His face did not express surprise or horror—nothing but kindness and compassion, while he answered, "My poor girl, I was afraid how it might have been." Then he led her to a chair, and sat down by her side, so as to let her perceive that he was ready to listen, and would give her time. He might be in haste, but it was no time to show it.

She now spoke with more hurry and agitation. "Yes, yes, papa, it was the very thing you warned me against—I mean—I mean the being set on my own way, and liking to tease the boys. Oh, if I could but speak to tell you all! But it seems like a weight here, choking me," and she touched her throat. "I can't get it out in words! Oh!" Poor Beatrice even groaned aloud with oppression.

"Do not try to express it," said her father; "at least, it is not I who can give you the best comfort. "Here"—and he took up a prayer-book.

"Yes, I feel as if I could turn there now I have told you, papa," said Beatrice; "but when I could not get at you, everything seemed dried up in me. Not one prayer or confession would come—but now, O! now you know it, and—and—I feel as if He would not turn away His face. Do you know I did try the 51st Psalm, but it would not do, not even 'deliver me from blood guiltiness,' it would only make me shudder! O, papa, it was dreadful!"

Her father's answer was to draw her down on her knees by his side, and read a few verses of that very Psalm, and a few clauses of the prayer for persons troubled in mind, and he ended with the LORD'S Prayer. Beatrice, when it was over, leaned her head against him, and did not speak, nor weep, but she seemed refreshed and relieved. He watched her anxiously and affectionately, doubting whether it was right to bestow so much time on her exclusively, yet unwilling to leave her. When she again spoke, it was in a lower, more subdued, and softer voice. "Aunt Mary will forgive me, I know; you will tell her, papa, and then it will not be quite so bad! Now I can pray that he may be saved—O, papa—disobedient, and I the cause; how could I ever bear the thought?"

"You can only pray," replied her father.

"Now that I can once more," said Beatrice; and again there was a silence, while she stood thinking deeply, but contrary to her usual habit, not speaking, and he knowing well her tendency to lose her repentant feelings by expressing them, was not willing to interrupt her. So they remained for nearly ten minutes, until at last he thought it time to leave her, and made some movement as if to do so. Then she spoke, "Only tell me one thing, papa. Do you think Aunt Mary has any hope? There was something—something death-like in her face. Does she hope?"

Mr. Geoffrey Langford shook his head, "Not yet," said he. "I think it may be better after the first night is over. She is evidently reckoning the hours, and I think she has a kind of morbid expectation that it will be as it was with his father, who lived twelve hours after his accident."

"But surely, surely," said Beatrice, eagerly, "this is a very different case; Fred has spoken so much more than my uncle did; and Philip says he is convinced that there is no fracture——"

"It is a morbid feeling," said Mr. Geoffrey Langford, "and therefore impossible to be reasoned away. I see she dreads to be told to hope; and I shall not even attempt it till these fatal twelve hours are over."

"Poor dear aunt!" sighed Beatrice. "I am glad, if it was to be, that you were here, for nobody else would understand her."

"Understand her!" said he, with something of a smile. "No, Bee, such sorrow as hers has a sacredness in it which is not what can be understood."

Beatrice sighed, and then with a look as if she saw a ray of comfort, said, "I suppose mamma will soon be here?"

"I think not," said her father; "I shall tell her she had better wait to see how things go on, and keep herself in reserve. At present, it is needlessly tormenting your aunt to ask her to leave Fred for a moment, and I do not think she has even the power to rest. While this goes on, I am of more use in attending to him than your mamma could be; but if he is a long time recovering, it will be a great advantage to have her coming fresh, and not half knocked up with previous attendance."

"But how she will wish to be here!" exclaimed Beatrice, "and how you will want her!"

"No doubt of that, Queenie," said her father smiling, "but we must reserve our forces, and I think she will be of the same mind. Well, I must go. Where is Henrietta to sleep to-night?"

"With me," said Beatrice.

"I will send her to you as soon as I can. You must do what you can with her, Bee, for I can see that the way she hangs on her mamma is quite oppressive. If she had but a little vigor!"

"I don't know what to do about her!" said Beatrice, with more dejection than she had yet shown, "I wish I could be of any comfort to her, but I can't—I shall never do good to anybody—only harm."

"Fear the harm and the good will come," said Mr. Geoffrey Langford. "Good-night, my dear."

Beatrice threw herself on her knees as soon as the door had closed on her father, and so remained for a considerable

time in one earnest, unexpressed outpouring of confession and prayer, for how long she knew not; all that she was sensible of was a feeling of relief, the repose of such humility and submission, such heart-felt contrition as she had never known before.

So she continued till she heard Henrietta's approaching steps, when she rose and opened the door, ready to welcome her with all the affection and consolation in her power. There stood Henrietta, a heavy weight in her eyes, her hair on one side all uncurled and flattened, the color on half her face much deepened, and a sort of stupor about her whole person, as if but one idea possessed her. Beatrice went up to meet her, and took her candle, asking what account she brought of the patient. "No better," was all the answer, and she sat down making no more detailed answers to all her cousin's questions. She would have done the same to her grandmamma, or any one else, so wrapped up was she in her own grief, but this conduct gave more pain to Beatrice than it could have done to any one else, since it kept up that most miserable feeling of being unforgiven. Beatrice let her sit still for some minutes, looking at her all the time with an almost piteous glance of entreaty, of which Henrietta was perfectly unconscious, and then began to beg her to undress, seconding the proposal by beginning to unfasten her dress. Henrietta moved pettishly, as if provoked at being disturbed.

"I beg your pardon, dear Henrietta," said Beatrice; "if you would but let me! You will be ill to-morrow, and that would be worse still."

"No, I sha'n't," said Henrietta, shortly, "never mind me."

"But I must, dear Henrietta. If you would but——"

"I can't go to bed," replied Henrietta, "thank you, Bee, never mind——"

Beatrice stood still, much distressed at her own inability to be of any service, and pained far more by the sight of Henrietta's grief than by the unkind rejection of herself.

"Papa thinks there is great hope," said she, abruptly.

"Mamma does not," said Henrietta, edging away from her cousin as if to put an end to the subject.

Beatrice almost wrung her hands. Oh, this willfulness of grief, how hard it was to contend with it! At last there was a knock at the door—it was grandmamma, suspecting that they were still up. Little recked Beatrice of the scolding that fell on herself for not having been in bed hours ago; she was only rejoiced at the determination that swept away all Henrietta's feeble opposition. The bell was rung, Bennet was summoned, grandmamma peremptorily ordered her to be undressed, and in another half hour the

cousins were lying side by side, Henrietta's lethargy had become a heavy sleep, Beatrice was broad awake, listening to every sound, forming every possible speculation of the future, and to her own overstretched fancy seeming actually to *feel* the thoughts chasing each other through her throbbing head.

CHAPTER XIV.

"HALF-PAST one," said Mr. Geoffrey Langford, as if it was a mere casual observation, though in reality it was the announcement that the fatal twelve hours had passed more than half an hour since.

There was no answer, but he heard a slight movement, and though carefully avoiding any attempt to penetrate the darkness around the sick bed, he knew full well that his sister was on her knees, and when he again heard her voice in reply to some rambling speech of her son, it had a tremulous tone, very unlike its former settled hopelessness.

Again, when Philip Carey paid his morning visit, she studied the expression of his face with anxious, inquiring, almost hopeful eyes, the crushed, heart-broken indifference of yesterday had passed away, and when the expediency of obtaining further advice was hinted at, she caught at the suggestion with great eagerness, though the day before her only answer had been, "As you think right." She spoke so as to show the greatest consideration for the feelings of Philip Carey; then, with her usual confiding spirit, she left the selection of the person to be called in entirely to him, to her brother and father-in-law, and returned to her station by Frederick, who had already missed and summoned her.

Philip, in spite of the small follies which provoked Beatrice's sarcasm, was by no means deficient in good sense or ability; his education had owed much to the counsels of Mr. Geoffrey Langford, whom he regarded with great reverence, and he was so conscious of his own inexperience and diffident of his own opinion, as to be very anxious for assistance in this, the first very serious case which had fallen under his own management. The proposal had come at first from himself, and this was a cause of great rejoicing to those who had to reconcile Mrs. Langford to the measure. In her eyes a doctor was a doctor, member of a privileged fraternity in which she saw no distinctions, and to send for advice from London would, she thought, not only hurt the feelings of Mrs. Roger Langford, and all the Carey connection, but seriously injure the reputation of young Mr. Carey in his own neighborhood.

Grandpapa answered, and Beatrice was glad he did so, that such considerations were as nothing when weighed in the scale against Frederick's life; she was silenced, but unconvinced, and unhappy till her son Geoffrey, coming down late to breakfast, greatly comforted her by letting her make him some fresh toast with her own hands, and persuading her that it would be greatly in favor of Philip's practice that his opinion should be confirmed by an authority of note.

The electric telegraph and the railroad brought the surgeon even before she had begun seriously to expect him, and his opinion was completely satisfactory as far as regarded Philip Carey and the measures already taken; Uncle Geoffrey himself feeling convinced that his approval was genuine, and not merely assumed for courtesy's sake. He gave them, too, more confident hope of the patient than Philip, in his diffidence, had ventured to do, saying that though there certainly was concussion of the brain, he thought there was great probability that the patient would do well, provided that they could combat the feverish symptoms which had begun to appear. He consulted with Philip Carey, the future treatment was agreed upon, and he left them with cheered and renewed spirits to enter on a long and anxious course of attendance. Roger, who was obliged to go away the next day, cheered up his brother Alex into a certainty that Fred would be about again in a week, and though no one but the boys shared this belief, yet the assurances of any one so sanguine, inspired them all with something like hope.

The attendance at first fell almost entirely on Mrs. Frederick Langford and Uncle Geoffrey, for the patient, who had now recovered a considerable degree of consciousness, would endure no one else. If his mother's voice did not answer him the first moment, he instantly grew restless and uneasy, and the plaintive inquiry—"Is Uncle Geoffrey here?" was many times repeated. He would recognize Henrietta, but his usual answer to her was: "You speak so loud," though, in reality, her tone was almost exactly the same as her mother's, and above all others he disliked the presence of Philip Carey.

"Who is that?" inquired he, the first time that he was at all conscious of the visits of other people; and when his mother explained, he asked, quickly: "Is he gone?"

The next day, Fred was alive to all that was going on, but suffering considerable pain, and with every sense quickened to the most acute and distressing degree; his eyes dazzled by light which, as he declared, glanced upon the picture-frames in a room where his mother and uncle could scarcely see to find their way, and his ears pierced,

as it were, by the slightest sound in the silent house, sleepless with pain, incapable of thought, excessively irritable in temper, and his faculties, it seemed, restored only to be the means of suffering. Mrs. Langford came to the door to announce that Philip Carey was come. Mr. Geoffrey Langford went to speak to him, and grandmamma and Henrietta began to arrange the room a little for his reception. Fred, however, soon stopped this. "I can't bear the shaking," said he. "Tell them to leave off, mamma."

Grandmamma, unconscious of the pain she was inflicting, and believing that she made not the slightest noise, continued to put the chairs in order, but Fred gave an impatient, melancholy sort of groan and exclamation, and Mrs. Langford remarked, "Well, if he cannot bear it, it cannot be helped; but it is quite dangerous in this dark room!" And out she went, Fred frowning with pain at every step she took.

"Why do you let people come?" asked he sharply of his mother. "Where has Uncle Geoffrey gone?"

"He is speaking to Mr. Philip Carey, my dear; he will be here with him directly."

"I don't want Philip Carey; don't let him come."

"My dear boy, he must come; he has not seen you today; perhaps he may do something for this sad pain."

Fred turned away impatiently, and, at the same moment, Uncle Geoffrey opened the door, to ask if Fred was ready.

"Yes," said Mrs. Frederick Langford, and Philip entered. But Fred would not turn toward him till desired to do so, nor give his hand readily for his pulse to be felt. Philip thought it necessary to see his face a little more distinctly, and begged his pardon for having the window-shutters partly open; but Fred contrived completely to frustrate his intentions, as with an exclamation, which had in it as much of anger as of pain, he turned his face inward to the pillow, and drew the bed-clothes over it.

"My dear boy," said his mother, pleadingly, "for one moment only!"

"I told you I could not bear the light," was all the reply.

"If you would but oblige me for a few seconds," said Philip.

"Fred!" said his uncle, gravely; and Fred made a slight demonstration as if to obey, but at the first glimpse of the dim light, he hid his face again, saying, "I can't;" and Philip gave up the attempt, closed the shutter, unfortunately not quite as noiselessly as Uncle Geoffrey had opened it, and proceeded to ask sundry questions; to which the patient scarcely vouchsafed a short and pettish reply.

When at last he quitted the room, and was followed by Mrs. Frederick Langford, a "Don't go, mamma," was immediately heard.

"You must spare me for a very little while, my dear," said she, gently but steadily.

"Don't stay long, then," replied he.

Uncle Geoffrey came up to his bedside, and with a touch soft and light as a woman's arranged the coverings disturbed by his restlessness, and for a few moments succeeded in tranquilizing him, but almost immediately he renewed his entreaties that his mother would return, and had it been any other than his uncle who had taken her place, would have grumbled at his not going to call her. On her return, she was greeted with a discontented murmur: "What an immense time you have stayed away!"—presently after, "I wish you would not have that Carey!" and then, "I wish we were at Rocksand—I wish Mr. Clarke was here."

Patience in illness is a quality so frequently described in books, as well as actually found in real life, that we are apt to believe that it comes as a matter of course, and without previous training, particularly in the young, and that peevishness is especially reserved for the old and querulous, who are to try the amiability of the heroine. To a certain degree this is often the case; the complete prostration of strength, and the dim awe of approaching death, in the acute illnesses of the young, often tame down the stubborn or petulant temper, and their patience and forbearance become the wonder and admiration of those who have seen germs of far other dispositions. And when this is not the case, who would have the heart to complain? Certainly not those who are like the mother and uncle who had most to endure from the exacting humors of Frederick Langford. High spirits, excellent health, a certain degree of gentleness of character, and a home where, though he was not over indulged, there was little to ruffle him, all had hitherto combined to make him appear one of the most amiable, good-tempered boys that ever existed; but there was no substance in this apparent good quality, it was founded on no real principle of obedience or submission, and when to an habitual spirit of quiet determination to have his own way, was superadded the irritability of nerves which was a part of his illness, when his powers of reflection were too much weakened to endure or comprehend argument; when, in fact, nothing was left to fall back upon but the simple obedience which would have been required in a child, and when that obedience was wanting, what could result but increased discomfort to himself and all concerned? Yes, even as we should lay up a store of

prayers against that time when we shall be unable to pray for ourselves, so surely should we lay up a store of habits against the time when we may be unable to think or reason for ourselves! How often have lives been saved by the mere instinct of unquestioning, instantaneous obedience!

Had Frederick possessed that instinct, how much present suffering and future wretchedness might have been spared him! His ideas were as yet too disconnected for him to understand or bear in mind that he was subjecting his mother to excessive fatigue, but the habit of submission would have led him to bear her absence patiently, instead of perpetually interrupting even the short repose which she would now and then be persuaded to seek on the sofa. He would have spared her his perpetual, harassing complaints—not so much of the pain he suffered, as of everything and every person who approached him, his Uncle Geoffrey being the only person against whom he never murmured. Nor would he have rebelled against measures to which he was obliged to submit in the end, after he had distressed every one, and exhausted himself, by his fruitless opposition.

It was marvelous that the only two persons whose attendance he would endure could bear up under the fatigue. Even Uncle Geoffrey, one of these spare wiry men who, without much appearance of strength, are nevertheless capable of such continued exertion, was beginning to look worn and almost aged; and yet Mrs. Frederick Langford was still indefatigable, unconscious of weariness, quietly active, absorbed in the thought of her son, and yet not so absorbed as not to be full of consideration for all around. All looked forward with apprehension to the time when the consequences of such continued exertion must be felt; but in the meantime it was not in the power of any one except her brother Geoffrey to be of any assistance to her, and her relations could only wait and watch with such patience as they could command, for the period when their services might be effectual.

Mrs. Langford was the most visibly impatient. The hasty bustling of her very quietest steps gave such torture to Frederick, as to excuse the upbraiding eyes which he turned on his poor perplexed mother, whenever she entered the room; and her fresh arrangements and orders always created a disturbance, which did him such positive injury, that it was the aim of the whole family to prevent her visits there. This was, as may be supposed, no easy task. Grandpapa's "You had better not, my dear," checked her for a little while, but was far from satisfying her: Uncle Geoffrey, who might have had the best chance, had not

time to spare for her; and no one could persuade her how impossible, nay, how dangerous it was to attempt to reason with the patient; so she blamed the whole household for indulging his fancies, and half a dozen times a day pronounced that he would be the death of his mother. Beatrice did the best she could to tranquilize her; but two spirits so apt to clash did not accord particularly well even now, though Busy Bee was too much depressed to queen it as usual. To feel herself completely useless in the midst of the suffering she had occasioned was a severe trial; and above all, poor child, she longed for her mother, and the repose of confession and parental sympathy. She saw her father only at meal-times; she was anxious and uneasy at his worn looks, and even he could not be all that her mother was. Grandpapa was kind as ever, but the fault that sat so heavy on her mind was not one for discussion with any one but a mother, and this consciousness was the cause of a little reserve with him, such as had never before existed between them.

Alexander was more of a comfort to her than any one else, and that chiefly because he wanted her to be a comfort to him. All the strong affection and esteem which he really entertained for Frederick was now manifested, and the remembrance of old rivalries and petty contention served but to make the reaction stronger. He kept aloof from his brothers, and spent every moment he could at the Hall, either reading in the library or walking up and down the garden paths with Queen Bee. One of the many conversations which they held will serve as a specimen of the rest.

"So they do not think he is much better to-day," said Alex, walking into the library, where Beatrice was sealing some letters.

Beatrice shook her head. "Every day that he is not worse is so much gained," she said.

"It is very odd," meditated Alex. "I suppose the more heads have in them the easier it is to knock them!"

Beatrice smiled. "Thick skulls are proverbial, you know, Alex."

"Well, I really believe it is right. Look, Bee," and he examined his own face in the glass over the chimney; "there, do you see a little bit of a scar under my eyebrow? there! Well, that was where I was knocked over by a cricket-ball last half, pretty much harder than poor Fred could have come against the ground, but what harm did it do me? Why, everything spun round with me for five minutes or so, and I had a black eye enough to have scared you, but I was not a bit the worse otherwise. Poor Fred, he was quite frightened for me, I believe; for the

first thing I saw was him, looking all green and yellow, standing over me, and so I got up and laughed at him for thinking I could care about it. That was the worst of it! I wish I had not been always set against him. I would give anything now."

"Well, but Alex, I don't understand. You were very good friends at the bottom, after all; you can't have anything really to repent of toward him."

"Oh, haven't I, though?" was the reply. "It was more the other fellows' doing than my own, to be sure, and yet, after all, it was worse, knowing all about him as I did; but somehow, every one, grandmamma and all of you, had been preaching up to me all my life that Cousin Fred was to be *such* a friend of mine. And then when he came to school, there he was—a fellow with a pink and white face, like a girl's, and that did not even know how to shy a stone, and cried for his mamma! Well, I wish I could begin it all over again."

"But do you mean that he was really a—a—what you call a Miss Molly?"

"Who said so? No, not a bit of it!" said Alex. "No one thought so in reality, though it was a good joke to put him in a rage, and pretend to think he could not do anything. Why, it took a dozen times more spirit for him to be first in everything than for me, who had been knocked about all my life. And he was up to anything, Bee, to anything. The matches at football will be good for nothing now; I am sure I sha'n't care if we do win."

"And the prize," said Beatrice, "the scholarship!"

"I have no heart to try for it now. I would not, if Uncle Geoffrey had not a right to expect it of me. Let me see: if Fred is well by the summer, why then—hurrah! Really, Queenie, he might get it all up in no time, clever fellow as he is, and be first after all. Don't you think so?"

Queen Bee shook her head. "They say he must not read or study for a very long time," said she.

"Yes, but six months—a whole year, is an immense time," said Alex. "Oh, yes, he must, Bee. Reading does not cost him half the trouble it does other people; and his verses, they never fail—never, except when he is careless! and the sure way to prevent that is to run him up for time. That is right. Why, there!" exclaimed Alex, joyfully, "I do believe this is the very best thing for his success!" Beatrice could not help laughing, and Alex immediately sobered down as the remembrance crossed him, that if Fred were living a week hence, they would have great reason to be thankful.

"Ah! they will all of them be sorry enough to hear of

this," proceeded he. "There was no one so much thought of by the fellows, or the masters either."

"The masters, perhaps," said Beatrice; "but I thought you said there was a party against him among the boys?"

"O, nonsense! It was only a set of stupid louts who, just because they had pudding-heads themselves, chose to say that I did better without all his reading and Italian, and music, and stuffs, and I was foolish enough to let them go on, though I knew all the time it was nothing but chaff. I shall let them all know what fools they were for their pains, as soon as I go back. Why, Queenie, you, who only know Fred at home, you have not the slightest notion what a fellow he is. I'll just tell you one story of him."

Alexander forthwith proceeded to tell not one story alone, but many, to illustrate the numerous excellencies which he ascribed to Fred, and again and again blaming himself for the species of division which had existed between them, although the fact was that he had always been the most conciliatory of the two. Little did he guess, good, simple-hearted fellow, that each word was quite as much, or more, to his credit as to Frederick's; but Beatrice well appreciated them, and felt proud of him.

These talks were her chief comfort, and always served to refresh her, if only by giving her the feeling that some one wanted her, and not that the only thing she could do for anybody was the sealing of the letters which her father, whose eyes were supposed to be acquiring the powers of those of cats, contrived to write in the darkness of Fred's room. She thought she could have borne everything excepting Henrietta's coldness, which still continued, not from intentional unkindness or unwillingness to forgive, but simply because Henrietta was too much absorbed in her own troubles to realize to herself the feelings which she wounded. Her Uncle Geoffrey had succeeded by awakening her consideration for her mother, but with her and Fred it began and ended, and when outside the sick-room, she seemed not to have a thought beyond a speedy return to it. She seldom or never left it, except at meal times, or when her grandfather insisted on her taking a walk with him, as he did almost daily. Then he walked between her and Beatrice, trying in vain to arouse her to talk, and she, replying as shortly as possible when obliged to speak, left her cousin to sustain the conversation.

The two girls went to church with grandpapa on the feast of the Epiphany, and strange it was to them to see again the wreaths which their own hands had woven, looking as bright and festal as ever, the glistening leaves unfaded, and the coral berries looking fresh and gay. A tear

began to gather in Beatrice's eye, and Henrietta hung her head, as if she could not bear the sight of those branches, so lately gathered by her brother. As they were leaving the church, both looked toward the altar at the wreath which Henrietta had once started to see, bearing a deeper and more awful meaning than she had designed. Their eyes met, and they saw that they had the same thought in their minds.

When they were taking off their bonnets in their own room, Queen Bee stretched out a detaining hand, not in her usual commanding manner, but with a gesture that was almost timid, saying:

"Look, Henrietta, one moment, and tell me if you were not thinking of this."

And hastily opening the "Lyra Innocentium," she pointed out the verse:

"Such garland grave and fair,
His Church to-day adorns,
And—mark it well—e'en there
He wears his crown of thorns.

"Should aught profane draw near,
Full many a guardian spear
Is set around, of power to go
Deep in the reckless hand, and stay the grasping foe."

"They go very deep," sighed Henrietta, raising her eyes, with a mournful complaining glance.

Beatrice would have said more, but when she recollected her own conduct on Christmas Eve, it might well strike her that she was the "thing profane" that had then dared to draw near; and it pained her that she had even appeared for one moment to accuse her cousin. She was beginning to speak, but Henrietta cut her short by saying, "Yes, yes, but I can't stay," and was flying along the passage the next moment.

Beatrice sighed heavily, and spent the next quarter of an hour in recalling, with all the reality of self-reproach, the circumstances of her recklessness, vanity, and self-will on that day. She knelt and poured out her confession, her prayer for forgiveness, and grace to avoid the very germs of these sins for the future, before Him who seeth in secret; and a calm energetic spirit of hope, in the midst of true repentance, began to dawn upon her.

It was good for her, but was it not selfish in Henrietta thus to leave her alone to bear her burden? Yes, selfish it was; for Henrietta had heard the last report of Frederick since their return, and knew that her presence in his room was quite useless; and it was only for the gratification of her own feelings that she hurried thither, without even

stopping to recollect that her cousin might also be unhappy, and be comforted by talking to her.

Her thought was only the repining one: "the thorns go deep!" Poor child, had they yet gone deep enough? The patient may cry out, but the skillful surgeon will nevertheless probe on, till he has reached the source of the hidden malady.

CHAPTER XV.

On a soft hazy day in the beginning of February, the Knight Sutton carriage was on the road to Allonfield, and in it sat the Busy Bee and her father, both of them speaking far less than was their wont when alone together.

Mr. Geoffrey Langford took off his hat, so as to let the moist spring breeze play round his temples and in the thin locks where the silvery threads had lately grown more perceptible, and gazed upon the dewy grass, the tiny woodbine leaf, the silver "pussycats" on the withy, and the tasseled catkin of the hazel, with the eyes of a man to whom such sights were a refreshment, a sort of holiday—after the many springs spent in close courts of law and London smoke, and now after his long attendance in the warm, dark sick-room. His daughter sat by him, thinking deeply, and her heart full of a longing earnestness which seemed as if it would not let her speak. She was going to meet her mother, whom she had not seen for so long a time; but it was only to be for one evening! Her father, finding that his presence was absolutely required in London, and no longer actually indispensable at Knight Sutton, had resolved on changing places with his wife, and she was to go with him and take her mother's place in attending on Lady Susan St. Leger. They were now going to fetch Mrs. Geoffrey Langford home from the Allonfield station, and they would have one evening at Knight Sutton with her, returning themselves the next morning to Westminster.

They arrived at Allonfield, executed various commissions with which Mrs. Langford had been delighted to intrust Geoffrey; they ordered some new books for Frederick, and called at Philip Carey's for some medicines; and then driving up to the station, watched eagerly for the train.

Soon it was there, and there at length she was; her own dear self—the dark aquiline face, with its sweetest and brightest of all expressions; the small, youthful figure, so active, yet so quiet and elegant, the dress so plain and simple, and yet with that distinguished air. How happy Beatrice was that first moment of feeling herself at her side!

"My dear! my own dear child!" Then anxiously following her husband with her eye, as he went to look for her luggage, she said, "How thin he looks, Queenie!"

"O, he has been doing *so* much," said Busy Bee. "It is only for this last week he has gone to bed at all, and then only on the sofa in Fred's room. This is the first time he has been out, except last Sunday to church, and a turn or two round the garden with grandmamma."

He came back before Queen Bee had done speaking. "Come, Beatrice," said he to his wife, "I am in great haste to have you at home, that fresh face of yours will do us all so much good."

"One thing is certain," said she; "I shall send home orders that you shall be allowed no strong coffee at night, and that Busy Bee shall hide half the mountain of letters in the study. But tell me honestly, Geoffrey, are you really well?"

"Perfectly, except for a growing disposition to yawn," said her husband, laughing.

"Well, what are the last accounts of the patient?"

"He is doing very well; the last thing I did before coming away was to lay him down on the sofa, with Retzsch's outlines to look at; so you may guess that he is getting on quickly. I suppose you have brought down the books and prints?"

"Such a pile that I almost expected my goods would be overweight."

"It is very fortunate that he has a taste for this kind of things; only take care, they must not be at Henrietta's discretion, or his own, or he will be overwhelmed with them—a very little oversets him, and might do great mischief."

"You don't think the danger of inflammation over yet, then?"

"Oh, no! His pulse is so very easily raised that we are obliged to keep him very quiet, and nearly to starve him, poor fellow; and his appetite is returning so fast that it makes it very difficult to manage him."

"I should be afraid that now would be the time to see the effects of poor Mary's over-gentleness."

"Yes; but what greatly increases the difficulty is that Fred has some strange prejudice against Philip Carey."

Busy Bee, who had heard nothing of this, felt her cheeks flush, while her father proceeded:

"I do not understand it at all. Philip's manners in a sick-room are particularly good—much better than I should have expected, and he has been very attentive and gentle-handed; but, from the first, Fred has shown a dislike to him, questioned all his measures, and made the

most of it whenever he was obliged to give him any pain. The last time the London doctor was here I am sure he hurt Fred a great deal more than Philip has ever done, yet the boy bore it manfully, though he shrinks and exclaims the moment Philip touches him. Then he is always talking of wishing for old Clarke at Rocksand, and I give Mary infinite credit for never having proposed to send for him. I used to think she had great faith in the old man, but I believe it was only her mother."

"Of course it was. It is only when Mary has to act alone that you really are obliged to perceive all her excellent sense and firmness, and I am very glad that you should be convinced, now and then, that in nothing but her fears, poor thing, has she anything of the spoiling mamma about her."

"As if I did not know that," said he, smiling.

"And so she would not yield to this fancy? Very wise indeed. But I should like to know the reason of this dislike on Fred's part. Have you ever asked him?"

"No; he is not in a fit state for argument; and, besides, I think the prejudice would only be strengthened. We have praised Philip again and again, before him, and said all we could think of to give him confidence in him, but nothing will do. In fact, I suspect Mr. Fred was sharp enough to discover that we were talking for a purpose. It has been the great trouble this whole time, though neither Mary nor I have mentioned it, for fear of annoying my mother."

"Papa," said Busy Bee, "I am afraid I know the reason but too well. It was my foolish way of talking about the Careys; I used to tease poor Fred about Roger's having taken him from Philip, and say all sorts of things that I did not really mean."

"Hem!" said her father. "Well, I should think it might be so; it always struck me that the prejudice must be grounded upon some absurd notion, the memory of which had passed away, while the impression remained."

"And do you think I could do anything toward removing it? You know I am to go and wish Fred 'good-bye' this afternoon."

"Why, yes; you might as well try to say something cheerful, which might do away with the impression. Not that I think it will be of any use; only do not let him think it has been under discussion."

Beatrice assented, and was silent again while they went on talking.

"And Mary has held out wonderfully!" said her mother.

"Too wonderfully," said Mr. Geoffrey Langford, "in a

way which I fear will cost her dearly. I have been positively longing to see her give way as she ought to have done under the fatigue; and now I am afraid of the old complaint. She puts her hand to her side now and then, and I am persuaded that she had some of those spasms a night or two ago."

"Ah!' said his wife, with great concern, "that is just what I have been dreading the whole time. When she consulted Dr. ——, how strongly he forbade her to use any kind of exertion. Why would you not let me come? I assure you it was all I could do to keep myself from setting off."

"It was very well behaved in you indeed, Beatrice," said he, smiling; "a sacrifice which very few husbands would have had resolution either to make themselves or to ask of their wives. I thanked you greatly when I did not see you."

"But why would you not have me? Do you not repent it now?"

"Not in the least. Fred would let no one come near him but his mother and me; you could not have saved either of us an hour's nursing then, whereas now you can keep Fred in order, and take care of Mary, if she will suffer it, and that she will do better from you than from any one else."

They were now reaching the entrance of Sutton Leigh Lane, and Queen Bee was called upon for the full history of the accident, which, often as it had been told by letter, must again be narrated in all its branches. Even her father had never had time to hear it completely; and there was so much to ask and to answer on the merely external circumstances, that they had not begun to enter upon feelings and thoughts when they arrived at the gate of the paddock, which was held open by Dick and Willy, excessively delighted to see Aunt Geoffrey.

In a few moments more she was affectionately welcomed by old Mrs. Langford, whose sentiments with regard to the two Beatrices were of a curiously varying and always opposite description. When her daughter-in-law was at a distance, she secretly regarded with a kind of respectful aversion, both her talents, her learning, and the fashionable life to which she had been accustomed; but in her presence, the winning, lively simplicity of her manners completely dispelled all these prejudices in an instant, and she loved her most cordially for her own sake, as well as because she was Geoffrey's wife. On the contrary, the younger Beatrice, while absent, was the dear little granddaughter—the queen of bees, the cleverest of creatures; and, while present, it has already been shown how constantly the two tempers fretted each other, or had once

done so, though now, so careful had Busy Bee lately been, that there had been only one collision between them for the last ten days, and that was caused by her strenuous attempts to convince grandmamma that Fred was not yet fit for boiled chicken and calves' foot jelly.

Mrs. Langford's greetings were not half over when Henrietta and her mamma hastened down-stairs to embrace dear Aunt Geoffrey.

"My dear Mary, I am so glad to come to you at last."

"Thank you, O! thank you, Beatrice. How Fred will enjoy having you now!"

"Is he tired?" asked Uncle Geoffrey.

"No, not at all; he seems to be very comfortable. He has been talking of Queen Bee's promised visit. Do you like to go up now, my dear?"

Queen Bee consented eagerly, though with some trepidation, for she had not seen her cousin since his accident, and besides, she did not know how to begin about Philip Carey. She ran to take off her bonnet, while Henrietta went to announce her coming. She knocked at the door, Henrietta opened it, and coming in, she saw Fred lying on the sofa by the fire, in his dressing-gown, stretched out in that languid, listless manner that betokens great feebleness. There were the purple marks of leeches on his temples; his hair had been cropped close to his head; his face was long and thin, without a shade of color, but his eyes looked large and bright; and he smiled and held out his hand: "Ah, Queenie, how d'ye do?"

"How d'ye do, Fred? I am glad you are better."

"You see I have the asses' ears after all," said he, pointing to his own, which were very prominent in his shorn and shaven condition.

Beatrice could not very easily call up a smile, but she made an effort, and succeeded while she said, "I should have complimented you on the increased wisdom of your looks. I did not know the shape of your head was so like papa's."

"Is Aunt Geoffrey come?" asked Fred.

"Yes," said his sister; "but mamma thinks you had better not see her till to-morrow."

"I wish Uncle Geoffrey was not going," said Fred. "Nobody else has the least notion of making one tolerably comfortable."

"O, your mamma, Fred!" said Queen Bee.

"Oh, yes, mamma, of course! But then she is getting fagged!"

"Mamma says she is quite unhappy to have kept him so long from his work in London," said Henrietta; "but I do not know what we should have done without him."

"I do not know what we shall do now," said Fred, in a languid and doleful tone.

The Queen Bee, thinking this is a capital opportunity, spoke with almost alarming eagerness, "Oh, yes, Fred, you will get on famously; you will enjoy having *my* mamma so much, and you are so much better already, and Philip Carey manages you so well——"

"Manages!" said Fred; "ay, and I'll tell you how, Queenie; just as the man managed his mare when he fed her on a straw a day. I believe he thinks I am a ghoul, and can live on a grain of rice. I only wish he knew himself what starvation is. Look here! you can almost see the fire through my hand, and if I do but lift up my head, the whole room is in a merry-go-round. And that is nothing but weakness; there is nothing else on earth the matter with me, except that I am starved down to the strength of a midge!"

"Well, but of course he knows," said Busy Bee. "Papa says he has had an excellent education, and he must know."

"To be sure he does perfectly well; he is a sharp fellow, and knows how to keep a patient when he has got one."

"How can you talk such nonsense, Fred? One comfort is, that it is a sign you are getting well, or you would not have spirits to do it."

"I am talking no nonsense," said Fred, sharply; "I am as serious as possible."

"But you can't really think that if Philip was capable of acting in such an atrocious way, that papa would not find it out, and the other doctor too?"

"What! when this man gets I don't know how many guineas from mamma every time he comes, do you think that it is for his interest that I should get well."

"My dear Fred," interposed his sister, "you are exciting yourself, and that is so very bad for you."

"I do assure you, Henrietta, you would find it very little exciting to be shut up in this room, with half a teaspoonful of wishy-washy pudding twice a day, and all just to fill Mr. Philip Carey's pockets! Now, there was old Clarke at Rocksand, he had some feeling for one, poor old fellow, but this man, not the slightest compunction has he; and I am ready to kick him out of the room when I hear that silky voice of his trying to be gen-tee-eel, and condoling; and those boots—O! Busy Bee! those boots! whenever he makes a step I always hear them say, 'O what a pretty fellow I am!'"

"You seem to be very merry here, my dears," said Aunt Mary, coming in; "but I am afraid you will tire your-

self, Freddy; I heard your voice even before I opened the door."

Fred was silent, a little ashamed, for he had sense enough not absolutely to believe all that he had been saying, and his mother, sitting down, began to talk to the visitor. "Well, my little queen, we have seen very little of you of late, but we shall be very sorry to lose you. I suppose your mamma will have all your letters, and Henrietta must not expect any, but we shall want very much to know how you get on with Aunt Susan and her little dog."

"O, very well, I dare say," said Beatrice, rather absently, for she was looking at her aunt's delicate, fragile form, and thinking of what her father had been saying.

"And Queenie," continued her aunt, earnestly, "you must take great care of your papa—make him rest, and listen to your music, and read story-books instead of going back to his work all the evening."

"To be sure I shall, Aunt Mary, as much as I possibly can."

"But, Bee," said Fred, "you don't mean that you are going to be shut up with that horrid old Lady Susan all this time? Why don't you stay here, and let her take care of herself?"

"Mamma would not like that; and besides, to do her justice, she is really ill, Fred," said Beatrice.

"It is too bad, now I am just getting better—if they would let me, I mean," said Fred; "just when I could enjoy having you, and now there you go off to that old woman. It is a downright shame."

"So it is, Fred," said Queen Bee gayly, but not coquettishly, as once she would have answered him, "a great shame in you not to have learned to feel for other people, now you know what it is to be ill yourself."

"That is right, Bee," said Aunt Mary, smiling; "tell him he ought to be ashamed of having monopolized you all so long, and spoiled all the comfort of your household. I am sure I am," added she, her eyes filling with tears, as she affectionately patted Beatrice's hand.

Queen Bee's heart was very full, but she knew that to give way to the expression of her feelings would be hurtful to Fred, and she only pressed her aunt's long thin fingers very earnestly, and turned her face to the fire, while she struggled down the rising emotion. There was a little silence, and when they began to talk again, it was of the engravings at which Fred had just been looking. The visit lasted till the dressing-bell rang, when Beatrice was obliged to go, and she shook hands with Fred, saying cheerfully, "Well, good-bye. I hope you will be better friends with the doctors next time I see you."

"Never will I like one inch of a doctor, never!" repeated Fred, as she left the room and ran to snatch what moments she could with her mamma in the space allowed for dressing.

Grandmamma was happy that evening, for, except poor Frederick's own place, there were no melancholy gaps at the dinner-table. He had Bennet to sit with him, and besides, there was within call the confidential old man-servant who had lived so many years at Rocksand, and in whom both Fred and his mother placed considerable dependence.

Everything looked like recovery; Mrs. Frederick Langford came down and talked and smiled like her own sweet self; Mrs. Geoffrey Langford was ready to hear all the news, old Mr. Langford was quite in spirits again. Henrietta was bright and lively. The thought of long days in London with Lady Susan, and of long evenings with no mamma, and with papa either writing or at his chambers, began from force of contrast to seem doubly like banishment to poor litte Queen Bee, but whatever faults she had, she was no repiner. "I deserve it," said she to herself, "and surely I ought to bear my share of the trouble my willfulness has occasioned. Besides, with even one little bit of papa's company I am only too well off."

So she smiled, and answered grandpapa in his favorite style, so that no one would have guessed from her demeanor that a task had been imposed upon her which she so much disliked, and in truth her thoughts were much more on others than on herself. She saw all hopeful and happy about Fred, and as to her aunt, when she saw her as usual with all her playful gentleness, she could not think that there was anything seriously amiss with her, or if there was, mamma would find it out and set it all to rights. Then how soothing and comforting, now that the first acute pain of remorse was over, was that affectionate kindness, which, in every little gesture and word, Aunt Mary had redoubled to her ever since the accident.

Fred was all this time lying on his sofa, very glad to rest after so much talking; weak, dizzy, and languid, and throwing all the blame of his uncomfortable sensations on Philip Carey and the starvation system, but still, perhaps, not without thoughts of a less discontented nature, for when Mr. Geoffrey Langford came to help him to bed, he said, as he watched the various arrangements his uncle was for the last time sedulously making for his comfort, "Uncle Geoffrey, I ought to thank you very much; I am afraid I have been a great plague to you."

Perhaps Fred did not say this in all sincerity, for any one but Uncle Geoffrey would have completely disowned

the plaguing, and he fully expected him to do so; but his uncle had a stern regard for truth, coupled with a courtesy which left it no more harshness than was salutary.

"Anything for your good, my dear sir," said he, with a smile. "You are welcome to plague me as much as you like, only remember that your mamma is not quite so tough."

"Well, I do try to be considerate about her," said Fred. "I mean to make her rest as much as possible; Henrietta and I have been settling how to save her."

"You could save her more than all, Fred, if you would spare her discussions."

Fred held his tongue, for though his memory was rather cloudy about the early part of his illness, he did remember having seen her look greatly harassed one day lately when he had been arguing against Philip Carey.

Uncle Geoffrey proceeded to gather up some of the outlines which Henrietta had left on the sofa. "I like those very much," said Fred, "especially the 'Fight with the Dragon.'"

"You know Schiller's poem on it?" said Uncle Geoffrey.

"Yes, Henrietta has it in German."

"Well, it is what I should especially recommend to your consideration."

"I am afraid it will be long enough before I am able to go out on a dragon-killing expedition," said Fred, with a weary helpless sigh.

"Fight the dragon at home, then, Freddy. Now is the time for—

> "'The duty, hardest to fulfill,
> To learn to yield our own self-will.'"

"There is very little hasty pudding in the case," said Fred, rather disconsolately, and at the same time rather drolly, and with a sort of resolution of this kind, "I will try then, will not bother mamma, let that Carey serve me as he may. I will not make a fuss, if I can help it, unless he is very unreasonable indeed, and when I get well I will submit to be coddled in an exemplary manner; I only wonder when I shall feel up to anything again! Oh! what a nuisance it is to have this swimming head and aching knees, all by the fault of that Carey!"

Uncle Geoffrey said no more, for he thought a hint often was more useful than a lecture, even if Fred had been in a state for the latter; and besides, he was in greater request than ever on this last evening, so much so that it seemed as if no one was going to spare him even to have half an hour's talk with his wife. He did find the time for this at last, however, and his first question was, "What do you think of the little Bee?"

"I think with great hope, much more satisfactorily than I have been able to do for some time past," was the answer.

"Poor child, she has felt it very deeply," said he; "I have been grieved to have so little time to bestow on her."

"I am disposed to think," said Mrs. Geoffrey Langford, thoughtfully, "that it was the best thing for her to be thrown on herself. Too much talk has always been the mischief with her, as with many another only child, and it struck me to-day as a very good sign that she said so little. There was something very touching in the complete absence of moralizing to-day."

"None of her sensible sayings," said her father with a gratified though a grave smile. "It was perfectly open confession, and yet with no self in it. Ever since the accident there has been a staidness and sedateness about her manner which seemed like great improvement, as far as I have seen. And when it was proposed for her to go to Lady Susan, I was much pleased with her, she was so simple: 'Very well,' she said, 'I hope I shall be able to make her comfortable;' no begging off, no heroism. And really, Beatrice, don't you think we could make some other arrangement? It is too great a penance for her, poor child; Lady Susan will do very well, and I can have an eye to her, I am much inclined to leave the poor little Queen here with you."

"No, no, Geoffrey," said his wife, "that would never do. I do not mean on my aunt's account, but on the Busy Bee's; I am sure, wish it as we may," and the tears were in her eyes, "this is no time for even the semblance of neglecting a duty for her sake."

"Not so much hers as yours," said Mr. Geoffrey Langford; "you have more on your hands than I like to leave you alone to encounter, and she is a valuable little assistant. Besides, you have been without her so long, it is your turn to keep her now."

"No, no, no," she repeated, though not without an effort, "it is best as it is settled for all, and decidedly so for me, for with her to write to me about you every day, and to look after you, I shall be a hundred times more at ease than if I thought you were working yourself to death with no one to remonstrate."

So it remained as before decided, and the pain that the decision cost both mother and daughter was only to be inferred by the way in which they kept close together, as if determined not to lose unnecessarily one fragment of each other's company; but they had very few moments alone together and those were chiefly employed in practical mat-

hers, in minute directions as to the little things that conduced to keep Lady Susan in good humor, and above all, the arrangements for papa's comfort. There was thus not much time for Beatrice to spend with Henrietta, nor indeed would much have resulted if there had been more. As she grew more at ease about her brother, Henrietta had gradually resumed her usual manner, and was now as affectionate to Beatrice as ever, but she was quite unconscious of her previous unkindness, and therefore made no attempt to atone for it. Queen Bee had ceased to think of it, and if a reserve had grown up between the two girls, they neither of them perceived it.

Mr. Geoffrey Langford and his daughter set out on their return to London so early the next morning that hardly any of the family were up; but their hurried breakfast in the gray of morning was enlivened by Alex, who came in just in time to exchange some last words with Uncle Geoffrey about his school work, and to wish Queen Bee goodbye, with hopes of a merrier meeting next summer.

CHAPTER XVI.

MRS. GEOFFREY LANGFORD had from the first felt considerable anxiety for her sister-in-law, who, though cheerful as ever, began at length to allow that she felt worn out, and consented to spare herself more than she had hitherto done. The mischief was, however, not to be averted, and after a few days of increasing languor, she was attacked by a severe fit of the spasms, to which she had for several years been subject at intervals, and was obliged to confine herself entirely to her own room, relying with complete confidence on her sister for the attendance on her son.

It was to her, however, that Mrs. Geoffrey Langford wished most to devote herself; viewing her case with more uneasiness than that of Frederick, who was decidedly on the fair road to convalescence; and she only gave him as much time as was necessary to satisfy his mother, and to superintend the regulation of his room. He had all the society he wanted in his sister, who was always with him, and in grandpapa and grandmamma, whose short and frequent visits he began greatly to enjoy. He had also been more amenable to authority of late, partly in consequence of his uncle's warning, partly because it was not quite so easy to torment an aunt as a mother, and partly too because, excepting always the starving system, he had nothing in particular of which to complain. His mother's illness might also have its effect in subduing him; but it did not dwell much upon his spirits, or Henrietta's, as they were too

much accustomed to her ill health to be easily alarmed on her account.

It was the last day of the holidays, and Alexander was to come late in the afternoon—Fred's best time in the day—to take his leave. All the morning Fred was rather out of spirits, and talked to Henrietta a great deal about his school life. It might have been a melancholy day if he had been going back to school, but it was more sad to be obliged to stay away from the world where he had hitherto been measuring his powers, and finding his most exciting interests. It was very mortifying to be thus laid helplessly aside; a mere nobody, instead of an important and leading member of a community; at such an age, too, that it was probable that he would never return there again.

He began to describe to Henrietta all the scenes where he would be missing, but not missed; the old cathedral town, with its nest of trees, and the chalky hills; the quiet river creeping through the meadows; the "beech-crowned steep," girdled in with the "hollow trench that the Danish pirate made;" the old collegiate courts, the painted windows of the chapel, the surpliced scholars—even the very shops in the street had their part in his description; and then falling into silence he sighed at the thought that there he would be known no more—all would go on as usual, and after a few passing inquiries and expressions of compassion, he would be forgotten; his rivals would pass him in the race of distinction; his schoolboy career be at an end.

His reflections were interrupted by Mrs. Langford's entrance with Aunt Geoffrey, bringing a message of invitation from grandpapa to Henrietta, to walk with him to Sutton Leigh. She went; and Aunt Geoffrey, after putting a book within Fred's reach, and seeing that he and grandmamma were quite willing to be companionable, again returned to his mother.

Mrs. Langford thought him low and depressed, and began talking about his health and the present mode of treatment—a subject on which they were perfectly agreed; one being as much inclined to bestow a good diet as the other could be to receive it.

If his head was still often painfully dizzy and confused; if his eyes dazzled when he attempted to read for a long time together; if he could not stand or walk across the room without excessive giddiness—what was that but the effect of want of nourishment? "If there was a craving, that was a sure sign that the thing was wholesome." So she said, and her grandson assented with his whole heart.

In a few minutes she left the room, and presently returned with a most tempting-looking glass of clear amber-colored jelly.

"Oh, grandmamma!" said Fred, doubtfully, though his eyes positively lighted up at the sight.

"Yes, my dear, I had it made for your mamma, and she says it is very good. It is as clear as possible, and quite innocent; I am sure it must do you good."

"Thank you! Oh, thank you! It does look very nice," said Fred, gazing on it with wistful eyes, "but really I do not think I ought."

"If it was to do you any harm, I am sure I would not think of such a thing," said Mrs. Langford. "But I have lived a good many more years in the world than these young people, and I never saw any good come of all this keeping low. There was old Mr. Hilton, now, that attended all the neighborhood when I was a girl; he kept you low enough while the fever was on you, but as soon as it was gone, why then reinvigorate the system—that was what he used to say."

"Just like old Clarke, of Rocksand!" sighed Fred. "I know my sister would like nothing better than to be reinvigorated with that splendid stuff; but you know it would put them all in a dreadful state if they knew it."

"Never mind," said grandmamma; "'tis all my doing, you know. Come, to oblige me, taste it, my dear."

"One spoonful," said Fred—"to oblige grandmamma," added he, to himself; and he let grandmamma lift him up on the cushions as far as he could bear to have his head raised. He took the spoonful, then started a little—"There is wine in it!" said he.

"A very little—just enough to give it flavor; it cannot make any difference. Do you like it, my dear?" as the spoon scooped out another transparent rock. "Ay, that is right! I had the receipt from my old aunt Kitty, and nobody ever could make it like Judith."

"I am in for it now," thought Fred. "Well, 'tis excellent," said he; "capital stuff! I feel it all down to my fingers' ends," added he, with a smile, as he returned the glass, after fishing in vain for the particles remaining in the small end.

"That is right; I am so glad to see you enjoy it!" said grandmamma, hurrying off with the empty glass with speed, at which Fred smiled, as it implied some fears of meeting Aunt Geoffrey. He knew the nature of his own case sufficiently to be aware that he had acted very imprudently—that is to say, his better sense was aware—but his spirit of self-will made him consider all these precautions as nonsense, and was greatly confirmed by his feeling himself much more fresh and lively. Grandmamma returned to announce Alexander and Willy, who soon followed her, and after shaking hands, stood silent, much shocked at

the alteration in Fred's appearance. This impression, however, soon passed off, as Fred began to talk over school affairs in a very animated manner; sending messages to his friends, discussing the interests of the coming half year, the games, the studies, the employments; Alex lamenting Fred's absence, engaging to write, undertaking numerous commissions, and even prognosticating his speedy recovery, and attainment of that cynosure—the prize. Never had the two cousins met so cordially, or so enjoyed their meeting. There was no competition; each could afford to do the other justice, and both felt great satisfaction in doing so; and so high and even so loud became their glee, that Alex could scarcely believe that Fred was not in perfect health. At last Aunt Geoffrey came to put an end to it; and finding Fred so much excited, she made Alex bring his blunt honest farewells and good wishes to a speedy conclusion, desired Fred to lie quiet and rest, and sat down herself to see that he did so.

Fred could not easily be brought to repose; he went on talking fast and eagerly in praise of Alex, and in spite of her complete assent, he went on more and more vehemently, just as if he was defending Alex from some one who wanted to detract from his merits. She tried reading to him, but he grew too eager about the book; and at last she rather advanced the time for dressing for dinner, both for herself and Henrietta, and sent Bennet to sit with him, hoping thus perforce to reduce him to a quiescent state. He was by this means a little calmed for the rest of the evening; but so wakeful and restless a night ensued, that he began to be alarmed, and fully came to the conclusion that Philip Carey was in the right after all. Toward morning, however, a short sleep visited him, and he awoke at length quite sufficiently refreshed to be self-willed as ever; and, contrary to advice, insisted on leaving his bed at his usual hour.

Philip Carey came at about twelve o'clock, and was disappointed as well as surprised to find him so much more languid and uncomfortable, as he could not help allowing that he felt. His pulse, too, was unsatisfactory; but Philip thought the excitement of the interview with Alex well accounted for the sleepless night, as well as for the exhaustion of the present day; and Fred persuaded himself to believe so too.

Henrietta did not like to leave him to-day, but she was engaged to take a ride with grandpapa, who felt as if the little Mary of years long gone by was restored to him, when he had acquired a riding companion in his granddaughter. Mrs. Langford undertook to sit with Fred, and Mrs. Geoffrey Langford, who had been at first afraid that

she would be too bustling a nurse for him just now, seeing that he was evidently impatient to be left alone with her, returned to Mrs. Frederick Langford, resolving, however, not to be long absent.

In that interval Mrs. Langford brought in the inviting glass, and Fred, in spite of his good sense, could not resist it. Perhaps the recent irritation of Philip's last visit made him more willing to act in opposition to his orders. At any rate, he thought of little save of swallowing it before Aunt Geoffrey should catch him in the act, in which he succeeded; so that grandmamma had time to get the tell-tale glass safely into the store-closet just as Mrs. Frederick Langford's door was opened at the other end of the passage.

Fred's sofa cushions were all too soft or too hard that afternoon—too high or too low; there was a great mountain in the middle of the sofa, too, so that he could not lie on it comfortably. The room was chilly though the fire was hot, and how grandmamma did poke it! Fred thought she did nothing else the whole afternoon; and there was a certain concluding shovel that she gave to the cinders, that very nearly put him in a passion. Nothing would make him comfortable till Henrietta came in, and it seemed very long before he heard the paddock gate, and the horses' feet upon the gravel. Then he grew very much provoked because his sister went first to her mamma's room; and it was grandpapa who came to him full of a story of Henrietta's good management of her horse when they suddenly met the hounds in a narrow lane. In she came at last, in her habit, her hair hanging loosely round her face, her cheeks and eyes lighted up by the exercise, and some early primroses in her hand, begging his pardon for having kept him waiting, but saying she thought he did not want her directly, as he had grandpapa.

Nevertheless, he scolded her, ordered her specimens of the promise of spring out of the room on an accusation of their possessing a strong scent, made her make a complete revolution on his sofa, and then insisted on her going on with Nicolo de Lapi, which she was translating to him from the Italian. Warm as the room felt to her in her habit, she sat down directly, without going to take it off; but he was not to be thus satisfied. He found fault with her for hesitating in her translation, and desired her to read the Italian instead; then she read first so fast that he could not follow, and then so slowly that it was quite unbearable, and she must go on translating. With the greatest patience and sweetest temper she obeyed; only when next he interrupted her to find fault, she stopped, and said gently, "Dear Fred, I am afraid you are not feeling so well."

"Nonsense! What should make you think so? You think I am cross, I suppose. Well, never mind, I will go on for myself," said he, snatching the book.

Henrietta turned away to hide her tears, for she was too wise to vindicate herself.

"Are you crying? I am sure I said nothing to cry about; I wish you would not be so silly."

"If you would only let me go on, dear Fred," said she, thinking that occupying him would be better than arguing. "It is so dark where you are, and I will try to get on better. There is an easier piece coming."

Fred agreed, and she went on without interruption for some little time, till at last he grew so excited by the story as to be very angry when the failing light obliged her to pause. She tried to extract some light from the fire, but this was a worse offense than any; it was too bad of her, when she knew how he hated both the sound of poking, and that horrible red flickering light which always hurt his eyes. This dislike, which had been one of the symptons of the early part of his illness, so alarmed her that she had thoughts of going to call Aunt Geoffrey, and was heartily glad to see her enter the room.

"Well, how are you going on?" said she, cheerfully. "Why, my dear, how hot you must be in that habit!"

"Rather," said poor Henrietta, whose face between the heat and her perplexity, was almost crimson. "We have been reading 'Nicolo,' and I am very much afraid it is as bad as Alex's visit, and has excited Fred again."

"I am quite sick of hearing that word excitement!" said Fred, impatiently.

"Almost as tired as of having your pulse felt," said Aunt Geoffrey. "But yet I must ask you to submit to that disagreeable necessity."

Fred moved pettishly, but as he could not refuse, he only told Henrietta that he could not bear any one to look at him while his pulse was felt.

"Will you fetch me a candle, my dear?" said Aunt Geoffrey, amazed as well as terrified by the fearful rapidity of the throbs and trying to acquire sufficient composure to count them calmly. The light came, and still she held his wrist, beginning her reckoning again and again, in the hope that it was only some momentary agitation that had so quickened them.

"What! 'tis faster?" asked Fred, speaking in a hasty, alarmed tone, when she released him at last.

"You are flushed, Fred," she answered, very quietly, though she felt full of consternation. "Yes, faster than it ought to be; I think you had better not sit up any

longer this evening, or you will sleep no better than last night."

"Very well," said Fred.

"Then I will ring for Stephens," said she.

The first thing she did on leaving his room was to go to her own, and there write a note to young Mr. Carey, giving an account of the symptoms that had caused her so much alarm. As she wrote them down without exaggeration, and trying to give each its just weight, going back to recollect the first unfavorable sign, she suddenly remembered that as she left her sister's room, she had seen Mrs. Langford, whom she had left with Fred, at the door of the store-closet. Could she have been giving him any of her favorite nourishing things? Mrs. Geoffrey Langford could hardly believe that either party could have acted so foolishly, yet when she remembered a few words that had passed about the jelly that morning at breakfast, she could no longer doubt, and bitterly reproached herself for not having kept up a stricter surveillance. Of her suspicion she, however, said nothing, but sealing her note, she went down to the drawing-room, told Mr. Langford that she did not think Fred quite so well that evening, and asked him if he did not think it might be better to let Philip Carey know. He agreed instantly, and rang the bell to order a servant to ride to Allonfield; but Mrs. Langford, who could not bear any one but Geoffrey to act without consulting her, pitied the man and horse for being sent out so late, and opined that Beatrice forgot that she was not in London, where the medical man could be called in so easily.

It was fortunate that it was the elder Beatrice instead of the younger, for provoked as she already had been before with the old lady, it was not easy even for her to make a cheerful answer. "Well, it is very kind in you to attend to my London fancies," said she; "I think if we can do anything to spare him such a night as the last, it should be tried."

"Certainly, certainly," said Mr. Langford. "It is very disappointing when he was going on so well. He must surely have been doing something imprudent."

It was very tempting to interrogate Mrs. Langford, but her daughter-in-law had long since come to a resolution never to convey to her anything like reproach, let her do what she might in her mistaken kindness of heart, or her respectable prejudices; so, without entering on what many in her place might have made a scene of polite recrimination, she left the room, and on her way up heard Frederick's door gently opened. Stephens came quickly and softly to the end of the passage to meet her. "He is asking for you,

ma'am," said he; "I am afraid he is not so well; I did not like to ring, for fear of alarming my mistress, but——"

Mrs. Geoffrey Langford entered the room, and found that the bustle and exertion of being carried to his bed had brought on excessive confusion and violent pain. He put his hand to his forehead, opened his eyes, and looked wildly about him. "Oh, Aunt Geoffrey," he exclaimed, "what shall I do? It is as bad—worse than ever!"

"You have been doing something imprudent, I fear," said Aunt Geoffrey, determined to come to the truth at once.

"Only that glass of jelly—if I had guessed!"

"Only one?"

"One to-day, one yesterday. It was grandmamma's doing. Don't let her know that I told. I wish mamma was here!"

Aunt Geoffrey tried to relieve the pain by cold applications, but could not succeed, and Fred grew more and more alarmed.

"The inflammation is coming back!" he cried, in an agony of apprehension that almost overcame the sense of pain. "I shall be in danger—I shall lose my senses—I shall die! Mamma! Oh! where is mamma?"

"Lie still, my dear Fred," said Mrs. Geoffrey Langford, laying her hand on him so as to restrain his struggling movements to turn round or to sit up. "Resistance and agitation will hurt you more than anything else. You must control yourself, and trust to me, and you may be sure I will do the best in my power for you. The rest is in the hands of God."

"Then you think me very ill?" said Fred, trying to speak more composedly.

"I think you will certainly make yourself very ill, unless you will keep yourself quiet, both mind and body. There——" she settled him as comfortably as she could; "Now I am going away for a few minutes. Make a resolution not to stir till I come back. Stephens is here, and I shall soon come back."

This was very unlike the way in which his mother used to beseech him as a favor to spare her, and yet his aunt's tone was so affectionate as well as so authoritative, that he could not feel it unkind. She left the room, and as soon as she found herself alone in the passage, leaned against the wall and trembled, for she felt herself for a moment quite overwhelmed, and longed earnestly for her husband to think for her, or even for one short interval in which to reflect. For this, however, there was no time, and with one earnest mental supplication, summoning up her energies, she walked on to the person whom she at that mo-

ment most dreaded to see, her sister-in-law. She found her sitting in her arm chair, Henrietta with her, both looking very anxious, and she was glad to find her prepared.

"What is it?" was the first eager question.

"He has been attempting rather too much of late," was the answer, "and has knocked himself up. I came to tell you because I think I had better stay with him, and perhaps you might miss me."

"Oh no, no, pray go to him. Nothing satisfies me so well about him as that you should be there, except that I cannot bear to give you so much trouble. Don't stay here, answering questions. He will be so restless if he misses you——"

"Don't you sit *imagining*, Mary; let Henrietta read to you."

This proposal made Henrietta look so piteous and wistful, that her mother said, "No, no, let her go to Freddy, poor child; I dare say he wants her."

"By no means," said Aunt Geoffrey, opening the door; "he will be quieter without her."

Henrietta was annoyed, and walked about the room, instead of sitting down to read. She was too fond of her own will to like being thus checked, and she thought she had quite as good a right to be with her brother as her aunt could have. Every temper has one side or other on which it is susceptible; and this was hers. She thought it affection for her brother, whereas it was impatience of being ordered."

Her mother forced herself to speak cheerfully. "Aunt Geoffrey is a capital nurse," said she; "there is something so decided about her, that it always does one good. It saves all the trouble and perplexity of thinking for one's self."

"I had rather judge for myself," said Henrietta.

"That is all very well to talk of," said her mother, smiling sadly, "but it is a very different thing when you are obliged to do it."

"Well, what do you like to hear?" said Henrietta, who found herself too cross for conversation: "'The Old Man's Home?'"

"Do not read unless you like it, my dear; I think you must be tired. You would want 'lungs of brass' to go on all day to both of us. You had better not. I should like to talk."

Henrietta, being in a willful fit, chose nevertheless to read, because it gave her the satisfaction of feeling that Aunt Geoffrey was inflicting a hardship upon her; although her mother would decidedly have preferred conversation.

So she took up a book, and began, without any perception of the sense of what she was reading, but her thoughts dwelling partly on her brother, and partly on her aunt's provoking ways. She read on through a whole chapter, then closing the book hastily, exclaimed, "I must go and see what Aunt Geoffrey is doing with Fred."

"She is not such a very dangerous person," said Mrs. Frederick Langford, almost laughing at the form of the expression.

"Well, but you surely want to know how he is, mamma?"

"To be sure I do, but I am so afraid of his being disturbed. If he was just going to sleep now."

"Yes, but you know how softly I can open the door."

"Your aunt would let us know if there was anything to hear. Pray, take care, my dear."

"I must go, I can't bear it any longer; I will only just listen," said Henrietta; "I will not be a moment."

"Let me have the book, my dear," said her mother, who knew but too well the length of Henrietta's moments, and who had just, by means of a great effort, succeeded in making herself take interest in the book.

Henrietta gave it to her, and darted off. The door of Fred's room was ajar, and she entered. Aunt Geoffrey, Bennet, and Judith were standing round the bed, her aunt sponging away the blood that was flowing from Frederick's temples. His eyes were closed, and he now and then gave long, gasping sighs of oppression and faintness. "Leeches!" thought Henrietta, as she started with consternation and displeasure. "This is pretty strong! Without telling me or mamma! Well, this is what I call doing something with him indeed."

She advanced to the table, but no one saw her for more than a minute, till at last Aunt Geoffrey stepped quickly up to it in search of some bottle.

"Let me do something," said Henrietta, catching up the bottle that she thought likely to be the right one.

Her aunt looked vexed, and answered in a low, quick tone, "You had better stay with your mamma."

"But why are you doing this? Is he worse? Is Mr. Philip Carey here? Has he ordered it?"

"He is not come yet. My dear, I cannot talk to you; I should be much obliged if you would go back to your mamma."

Aunt Geoffrey went back to Fred, but a few minutes after she looked up and still saw Henrietta standing by the table. She came up to her. "Henrietta, you are of no use here; every additional person oppresses him; your mamma must be kept tranquil. Why will you stay?"

"I was just going," said Henrietta, taking this hurrying as an additional offense, and walking off in a dignified way.

It was hard to say what had affronted her most, the proceeding itself, the neglect, or the commands which Aunt Geoffrey had presumed to lay upon her, and away she went to her mamma, a great deal too much displeased, and too distrustful to pay the smallest attention to any precautions which her aunt might have tried to impress upon her.

"Well?" asked her mother, anxiously.

"She would not let me stay," answered Henrietta. "She has been putting on leeches."

"Leeches!" exclaimed her mother. "He must be much worse. Poor fellow! Is Mr. Carey here?"

"No; that is the odd thing."

"Has he not been sent for?"

"I am sure I don't know. Aunt Geoffrey seems to like to do things in her own way."

"It must be very bad indeed if she cannot venture to wait for him," said Mrs. Frederick Langford, much alarmed.

"And never to tell you!" said Henrietta.

"Oh, that was her consideration. She knew how foolishly anxious I should be. I have no doubt that she is doing right. How did he seem to be?"

"Very faint, I thought," said Henrietta; "there seemed to be a great deal of bleeding, but Aunt Geoffrey would not let me come near."

"She knows exactly what to do," said Mrs. Frederick Langford. "How well it was that she should be here."

Henrietta began to be so fretted at her mother's complete confidence in her aunt, that without thinking of the consequences she tried to argue it away. "Aunt Geoffrey is so quick—she does things without half the consideration other people do. And she likes to settle everything."

But happily the confiding friendship of a life-time was too strong to be even harassed for a moment by the petulant suspicions of an angry girl.

"My dear, if you were not vexed and anxious, I should tell you that you were speaking very improperly of your aunt. I am perfectly satisfied that she is doing what is right by dear Fred, as well as by me; and if I am satisfied, no one else has any right to object."

There was nothing left for Henrietta in her present state of spirits but to have a hearty cry, one of the best possible ways she could find of distressing her mother, who all the time was suffering infinitely more than she could imagine from her fears, her efforts to silence them, and the restraint

which she was exercising upon herself, longing as she did to fly to her son's room, to see with her own eyes, and only detained by the fear that her sudden appearance there might agitate him. The tears, whatever might be their effect upon her, did Henrietta good, and restored her to something more like her proper senses. She grew rather alarmed, too, when she saw her mamma's pale looks, as she leaned back almost exhausted with anxiety and repressed agitation.

Mrs. Langford came up to bring them some tea, and she, having little idea of the real state of things, took so encouraging a view as to cheer them both, and her visit did much service, at least to Henrietta. Then they heard sounds announcing Philip Carey's arrival, and presently after in came Bennet with a message from Mr. Frederick that he was better, and his mother was not to be frightened. At last came Aunt Geoffrey, saying: "Well, Mary, he is better. I have been very sorry to leave you so long, and I believe Henrietta," looking at her with a smile, "thinks I have used you very ill."

"I believe she did," said her mother, "but I was sure you would do right; you say he is better? Let me hear."

"Much better; only—— But, Mary, you look quite worn out, you should go to bed."

"Let me hear about him first."

Aunt Geoffrey accordingly told the whole history, as, perhaps, every one would not have told it, for one portion of it in some degree justified Henrietta's opinion that she had been doing a great deal on her own responsibility. It had been very difficult to stop the bleeding, and Fred, already very weak, had been so faint and exhausted that she had felt considerable alarm, and was much rejoiced by the arrival of Philip Carey, who had not been at home when the messenger reached his house. Now, however, all was well; he had fully approved all that she had done, and, although she did not repeat this to Mrs. Frederick Langford, had pronounced that her promptitude and energy had probably saved the patient's life. Fred, greatly relieved, had fallen asleep, and she had now come, with almost an equal sense of relief, to tell his mother all that had passed, and ask her pardon.

"Nay, Beatrice, what do you mean by that? Is it not what you and Geoffrey have always done to treat him as your own son instead of mine? and is it not almost my chief happiness to feel assured that you always will do so? You know that is the reason I never thank you."

Henrietta hung her head, and felt that she had been very unjust and ungrateful, more especially when her aunt said, "You thought it very hard to have your mouth

stopped, Henrietta, my dear, and I was sorry for it, but I had not much time to be polite."

"I am sorry I was in the way," said she, an acknowledgment such as she had seldom made.

Fred awoke the next morning much better, though greatly fallen back in his progress toward recovery, but his mother had during the night the worst fit of spasms from which she had ever suffered.

But Henrietta thought it so well accounted for by all the agitations of the evening before, that there was no reason for further anxiety.

It was a comfort to Aunt Geoffrey, who took it rather more seriously, that she received that morning a letter from her husband, concluding:

"As to the Queen Bee, I have no doubt that you can judge of her frame better from the tone of her letters than from anything I have to tell. I think her essentially improved and improving, and you will think I do not speak without warrant, when I tell you that Lady Susan expresses herself quite warmly respecting her this morning. She continues to imagine that she has the charge of Queen Bee, and not Queen Bee of her, and I think it much that she has been allowed to continue in the belief. Lady Amelia comes to-morrow, and then I hope the poor little woman's penance may be over, for though she makes no complaints, there is no doubt that it is a heavy one, as her thorough enjoyment of a book, and an hour's freedom from that little gossiping flow of plaintive talk, sufficiently testify."

CHAPTER XVII.

FREDERICK had lost much ground, and yet on the whole his relapse was of no slight service to him. In the earlier part of his illness he had been so stupefied by the accident, that he had neither been conscious of his danger, nor was able to preserve any distinct remembrance of what he had suffered. But this return to his former state, with all his senses perfect, made him realize the rest, and begin to perceive how near to the grave he had been brought. A deep, shuddering sense of awe came over him, as he thought what it would have been to die then, without a minute of clear recollection, and his last act one of willful disobedience. And how had he requited the mercy which had spared him? He had shown as much of that same spirit of self-will as his feebleness would permit; he had been exacting, discontented, rebellious, and well indeed had he deserved to be cut off in the midst of the sin in which he had persisted.

He was too weak to talk, but his mind was wide awake; and many an earnest thanksgiving, and resolution strengthened by prayer, were made in silence during the two or three days that passed, partly in such thoughts as these, and for many hours more in sleep; while sometimes his aunt, sometimes his sister, and sometimes even Bennet, sat by his bedside unchidden for not being "mamma."

"Above all," said he to himself, "he would for the future devote himself to make up to her for all that he had caused her to suffer for his sake. Even if he were never to mount a horse or fire a gun for the rest of his life, what would such a sacrifice be for such a mother?" It was very disappointing that, at present, all he could even attempt to do for her was to send her messages—and affection does not travel well by messages—and at the same time to show submission to her known wishes. And after all, it would have been difficult not to have shown submission, for Aunt Geoffrey, as he had already felt, was not a person to be argued with, but to be obeyed; and for very shame he could not have indulged himself in his Philippics after the proof he had experienced of their futility.

So, partly on principle, and partly from necessity, he ceased to grumble, and from that time forth it was wonderful how much less unpleasant even external things appeared, and how much his health benefited by the tranquillity of spirits thus produced. He was willing to be pleased with all that was done with that intent; and as he grew better, it certainly was a strange variety with which he had to be amused throughout the day. Very good-naturedly he received all such civilities, especially when Willy brought him a bottle of the first live sticklebacks of the season, accompanied by a message from Arthur that he hoped soon to send him a basin of tame tadpoles—and when John rushed up with a basket of blind young black satin puppies, their mother following in a state of agitation only equaled by that of Mrs. Langford and Judith.

Willy, a nice intelligent little fellow, grew very fond of him, and spent much time with him, taking delight in his books and prints, beyond what could have been thought possible in one of the Sutton Leigh party.

When he was strong enough to guide a pencil or pen, a very enjoyable correspondence commenced between him and his mother, who was still unable to leave her apartment; and hardly any one ever passed between the two rooms without being the bearer of some playful greeting, or droll description of the present scene and occupation, chronicles of the fashionable arrivals of the white clouds before the window, of a bunch of violets, or a new book; the fashionable departure of the headache, the fire, or a

robin; notices that tomtits were whetting their saws on the next tree, or of the domestic proceedings of the rooks who were building their house opposite to Mrs. Frederick Langford's window, and whom she watched so much that she was said to be in a fair way of solving the problem of how many sticks go to a crow's nest; criticisms of the books read by each party, and very often a reference to that celebrated billet, unfortunately delivered overnight to Prince Talleyrand, informing him that his devoted friend had scarce closed her eyes all night, and then only to dream of him!

Henrietta grew very happy. She had her brother again, as wholly hers as in their younger days—depending upon her, participating in all her pleasures, or rather giving her favorite occupations double zest, by their being for him, for his amusement. She rode and walked in the beautiful open spring country with grandpapa, to whom she was a most valuable companion; and on her return she had two to visit, both of whom looked forward with keen interest and delight to hearing her histories of down and wood, of field and valley, of farm-house, cottage, or school; had a laugh for the least amusing circumstance, admiration for the spring flower or leaf, and power to follow her descriptions of budding woods, soft rising hills, and gorgeous sunsets. How her mamma enjoyed comparing notes with her about those same woods and dells, and would describe the adventures of her own youth! And now it might be noticed that she did not avoid speaking of those in which Henrietta's father had been engaged; nay, she dwelt on them by preference, and without the suppressed sigh which had formerly followed anything like a reference to him. Sometimes she would smile to identify the bold open down with the same where she had run races with him, and even laugh to think of the droll adventures. Sometimes the shady woodland walk would make her describe their nutting parties, or it would bring her thoughts to some fit of childish mischief and concealment, and to the confession to which his bolder and more upright counsel had at length led her. Or she would tell of the long walks they had taken together when older grown, when each had become prime counselor and confidante of the other; and the interests and troubles of home and of school were poured out to willing ears, and sympathy and advice exchanged.

She told how Fred and Mary had been companions from the very first, how their love had grown up unconsciously, in the sports in the sunny fields, shady coombs, and green woods of their home; how it had strengthened and ripened with advancing years, and how bright and unclouded their sunshine had been to dwell on; this was her delight, while

the sadness which once spoke of crushed hopes and lost happiness, had gone from her smile. It was as if she still felt herself walking in the light of his love, and, at the same time, as if she wished to show him to his daughter as he was, and to tell Henrietta of these words and those ways of his which were most characteristic, and which used to be laid up so fast in her heart, that she could never have borne to speak of them. The bitterness of his death, as it regarded herself, seemed to have passed, the brightness of his memory alone remaining. Henrietta loved to listen, but scarcely so much as her mother loved to tell; and instead of agitating her, these recollections always seemed to soothe and make her happy.

Henrietta knew that Aunt Geoffrey and grandpapa were both of them anxious about her mother's health, but for her own part she did not think her worse than she had often been before; and whilst she continued in nearly the same state, rose every day, sat in her arm-chair, and was so cheerful, and even lively, there could not be very much amiss, even though there was no visible progress in amendment. Serious complaint there was, as she knew of old, to cause the spasms; but it had existed so long, that after the first shock of being told of it two years ago, she had almost ceased to think about it. She satisfied herself to her own mind that it could not, should not be progressing, and that this was only a very slow recovery from the last attack.

Time went on, and a shade began to come over Fred. He was bright and merry when anything occurred to amuse him, did not like reading less, or take less interest in his occupations; but in the intervals of quiet he grew grave and almost melancholy, and his inquiries after his mother grew minute and anxious.

"Henrietta," said he, one day when they were alone together, "I was trying to reckon how long it is since I have seen mamma."

"Oh, I think she will come and see you in a few days more," said Henrietta.

"You have told me that so many times," said Fred. "I think I must try to get to her. That passage, if it was not so *very* long! If Uncle Geoffrey comes on Saturday, I am sure he can manage to take me there."

"It will be a festival day indeed when you meet!" said Henrietta.

"Yes." said he, thoughtfully. Then returning to the former subject, "But how long is it, Henrietta? This is the twenty-seventh of March, is it not?"

"Yes; a whole quarter of a year you have been laid up here."

"It was somewhere about the beginning of February that Uncle Geoffrey went."

"The fourth," said Henrietta.

"And it was three days after he went away that mamma had those first spasms. Henrietta, she has been six weeks ill!"

"Well," said Henrietta, "you know she was five weeks without stirring out of the room, that last time she was ill at Rocksand, and she is getting better."

"I don't think it is getting better," said Fred. "You always say so, but I don't think you have anything to show for it."

"You might say the same for yourself," said Henrietta, laughing. "You have been getting better these three months, poor man, and you need not boast."

"Well, at least I can show something for it," said Fred; "they allow me a lark's diet instead of a wren's, I can hold up my head like other people now, and I actually made my own legs and the table's carry me to the window yesterday, which is what I call getting on. But I do not think it is so with mamma. A fortnight ago she used to be up by ten or eleven o'clock; now I don't believe she ever is till one."

"It has been close, damp weather," said Henrietta, surprised at the accurate remembrance, which she could not confute. "She misses the cold, bracing wind."

"I don't like it," said Fred, growing silent, and after a short interval beginning again more earnestly, "Henrietta, neither you nor any one else are keeping anything from me, I trust?"

"O no, no!" said Henrietta, eagerly.

"You are quite sure?"

"Quite," responded she. "You know all I know, every bit; and I know all Aunt Geoffrey does, I am sure I do, for she always tells me what Mr. Philip Carey says. I have heard Uncle and Aunt Geoffrey both say strong things about keeping people in the dark, and I am convinced they would not do so."

"I don't think they would," said Fred; "but I am not satisfied. Recollect and tell me clearly, are they convinced that this is only recovering slowly—I do not mean that; I know too well that this is not a thing to be got rid of; but do they think that she is going to be as well as usual?"

"I do," said Henrietta, "and you know I am more used to her illness than any of them. Bennet and I were agreeing to-day that, considering how bad the spasms were, and how much fatigue she had been going through, we could not expect her to get on faster."

"You do? But that is not Aunt Geoffrey."

"Oh! Aunt Geoffrey is anxious, and expected her to get on faster, just like Busy Bee expecting everything to be so quick; but I am sure you could not get any more information from her than from me, and impressions—I am sure you may trust mine, used as I am to watch mamma."

Fred asked no more; but it was observable that from that day he never lost one of his mother's little notes, placing them as soon as read in his pocket-book, and treasuring them carefully. He also begged Henrietta to lend him a miniature of her mother, taken at the time of her marriage. It represented her in all her youthful loveliness, with the long ringlets and plaits of dark brown hair hanging on her neck, the arch suppressed smile on her lips, and the laughing light in her deep blue eye. He looked at it for a little while, and then asked Henrietta if she thought that she could find, among the things sent from Rocksand, which had not yet been unpacked, another portrait, taken in the earlier months of her widowhood, when she had in some partial degree recovered from her illness, but her life seemed still to hang on a thread. Mrs. Vivian, at whose especial desire it had been taken, had been very fond of it, and had always kept it in her room, and Fred was very anxious to see it again. After a long search, with Bennet's help, Henrietta found it, and brought it to him. Thin, wan, and in the deep black garments, there was much more general resemblance to her present appearance in this than in the portrait of the beautiful smiling bride. "And yet," said Fred, as he compared them, "do not you think, Henrietta, that there is more of mamma in the first?"

"I see what you mean," said Henrietta. "You know it is by a much better artist."

"Yes," said he, "the other is like enough in feature—more so certainly to anything we have ever seen; but what a difference! And yet what is it? Look! Her eyes generally have something melancholy in their look, and yet I am sure those bright, happy ones put me much more in mind of hers than these, looking so weighed down with sorrow. And the sweet smile, that is quite her own!"

"If you could but see her now, Fred," said Henrietta, "I think you would indeed say so. She has now and then a beautiful little pink flush, that lights up her eyes as well as her cheeks; and when she smiles and talks about those old times with papa, she does really look just like the miniature, all but her thinness."

"I do not half like to hear of all that talking about my father," murmured Fred to himself as he leaned back. Henrietta at first opened her eyes; then a sudden percep-

tion of his meaning flashed over her, and she began to talk of something else as fast as she could.

Uncle Geoffrey came on Saturday afternoon, and after paying a minute's visit to Fred, had a conference of more than an hour with his sister-in-law. Fred did not seem pleased with his sister's information that "it was on business," and only was in a slight degree reassured by being put in mind that there was always something to settle at Lady-day. Henrietta thought her uncle looked grave; and as she was especially anxious to prevent either herself or Fred from being frightened, she would not leave him alone in Fred's room, knowing full well that no questions would be asked except in private—none at least of the description which she dreaded.

All Fred attempted was the making his long meditated request that he might visit his mother, and Uncle Geoffrey undertook to see whether it was possible. Numerous messages passed, and at length it was arranged that on Sunday, just before afternoon services when the house was quiet, his uncle should help him to her room, where his aunt would read to them both.

Frederick made quite a preparation for what was to him a great undertaking. He sat counting the hours all the morning, and when at length the time arrived, his heart beat so violently, that it seemed to take away all the little strength he had. His uncle came in, but waited a few moments; then said, with some hesitation, "Fred, you must be prepared to see her a good deal altered."

"Yes," said Fred, impatiently.

"And take the greatest care not to agitate her. Can you be trusted? I do not ask it for your own sake."

"Yes," said Fred, resolutely.

"Then come."

And in process of time Fred was at her door. There he quitted his uncle's arm, and came forward alone to the large easy-chair where she sat by the fireside. She started joyfully forward, and soon he was on one knee before her, her arms round his neck, her tears dropping on his face, and a quiet sense of excessive happiness felt by both. Then rising, he sunk back into another great chair, which his sister had arranged for him close to hers, and too much out of breath to speak, he passively let Henrietta make him comfortable there; while holding his mother's hand, he kept his eyes fixed upon her, and she, anxious only for him, patted his cushions, offered her own, and pushed her footstool toward him.

A few words passed between Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Langford outside the door.

"I still think it a great risk," said she.

"But I should not feel justified in preventing it," was his answer, "only do not leave them long alone." Then opening the door, he called, "Henrietta, there is the last bell." And Henrietta, much against her will, was obliged to go with him to church.

"Good-bye, my dear," said her mother. "Think of us prisoners in the right way at church, and not in the wrong one."

Strangely came the sound of the church-bell to their ears through the window, half open to admit the breezy breath of spring; the cawing of the rooks and the song of the blackbird came with it, the sky was clear and blue, the buds were bursting into life.

"How very lovely it is!" added she.

Fred made a brief reply, but without turning his head to the window. His eyes, his thoughts, his whole soul, were full of the contemplation of what was to him a thousand times more lovely—that frail, wasted form, namely, whose hand he held. The delicate pink color which Henrietta had described was on her cheek, contrasting with the ivory whiteness of the rest of her face; the blue eyes shone with a sweet, subdued brightness under their long, black lashes; the lips smiled, though languidly, yet as sunnily as ever; the dark hair lay in wavy lines along the sides of her face: and but for the helplessness with which the figure rested in the chair, there was less outward token of suffering than he had often seen about her—more appearance almost of youth and beauty. But it was not an earthly beauty; there was something about it which filled him with a kind of indescribable, undefined awe, together with dread of a sorrow toward which he shrunk from looking. She thought him fatigued with the exertion he had made, and allowed him to rest, while she contemplated with pleasure even the slight advances which he had already made in shaking off the traces of illness.

The silence was not broken till Aunt Geoffrey came in, just as the last stroke of the church-bell died away, bringing in her hand a fragrant spray of the budding sweet-brier.

"The bees are coming out with you, Freddy," said she. "I have just been round the garden watching them reveling in the crocuses."

"How delicious!" said Mrs. Frederick Langford, to whom she had offered the sweet-brier. "Give it to him, poor fellow; he is quite knocked up with his journey."

"O no, not in the least, mamma, thank you," said Fred, sitting up vigorously; "you do not know how strong I am growing." And then turning to the window, he made an effort, and began observing on her rook's nest, as she called

it, and her lilac buds. Then came a few more cheerful questions and comments on the late notes, and then Mrs. Frederick Langford proposed that the reading of the service should begin.

Aunt Geoffrey, kneeling at the table, read the prayers, and Fred took the alternate verses of the Psalms. It was the last day of the month, and as he now and then raised his eyes to his mother's face, he saw her lips follow the glorious responses in those psalms of praise, and a glistening in her lifted eyes such as he could never forget.

"He healeth those that are broken in heart, and giveth medicine to heal their sickness.

"He telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names."

He had read this verse as he had done many a time before, without thinking of the exceeding beauty of the manner in which it is connected with the former one; but in after years he never read it again without that whole room rising before his eyes, and above all his mother's face. It was a sweet soft light, and not a gloom, that rested round that scene in his memory; springtide sights and sounds, the beams of the declining sun, with its quiet spring radiance; the fresh mild air; even the bright fire, and the general look of calm cheerfulness which pervaded all around, all conduced to that impression which never left him.

The service ended, Aunt Geoffrey read the hymn for the day in the "Christian Year," and then left them for a few minutes; but, strange as it may seem, those likewise were spent in silence, and though there was some conversation when she returned, Fred took little share in it. Silent as he was, he could hardly believe that he had been there more than ten minutes, when sounds were heard of the rest of the family returning from church, and Mrs. Geoffrey Langford went down to meet them.

In another instant Henrietta came up, very bright and joyous, with many kind messages from Aunt Roger. Next came Uncle Geoffrey, who, after a few cheerful observations on the beauty of the day, to which his sister responded with pleasure, said, "Now, Freddy, I must be hard-hearted; I am coming back almost directly to carry you off."

"So soon!" exclaimed Henrietta. "Am I to be cheated of all the pleasures of seeing you together?"

No one seemed to attend to her; but as soon as the door had closed behind his uncle, Fred moved as if to speak, paused, hesitated, then bent forward, and shading his face with his hand, said in a low voice: "Mamma, say you forgive me."

She held out her arm, and again he sunk on his knee, resting his head against her.

"My own dear boy," said she, "I will not say I have nothing to forgive, for that I know is not what you want; but well do you know how freely forgiven and forgotten is all that you may ever feel to have been against my wish. God bless you, my own dear Frederick!" she added, pressing her hand upon his head. "His choicest blessings be with you forever."

Uncle Geoffrey's knock was heard; Frederick hastily rose to his feet, was folded in one more long embrace, then, without another word, suffered his uncle to lead him out of the room, and support him back to his own. He stretched himself on the sofa, turned his face inward, and gave two or three long gasping sighs, as if completely overpowered, though his uncle could scarcely determine whether by grief or by physical exhaustion.

Henrietta looked frightened, but her uncle made her a sign to say nothing; and after watching him anxiously for some minutes, during which he remained perfectly still, her uncle left the room, and she sat down to watch him, taking up a book, for she dreaded the reveries in which she had once been so prone to indulge. Fred remained for a long time tranquil, if not asleep; and when at length he was disturbed, complained that his head ached, and seemed chiefly anxious to be left in quiet. It might be that, in addition to his great weariness, he felt a charm upon him which he could not bear to break. At any rate, he scarcely looked up or spoke all the rest of the evening, excepting that, when he went to bed, he sent a message that he hoped Uncle Geoffrey would come to his room the next morning before setting off, as he was obliged to do at a very early hour.

He came, and found Fred awake, looking white and heavy-eyed, as if he had slept little, and allowing that his head still ached.

"Uncle Geoffrey," said he, raising himself on his elbow, and looking at him earnestly, "would it be of no use to have further advice?"

His uncle understood him, and answered, "I hope that Dr. —— will come this evening or to-morrow morning. But," added he, slowly and kindly, "you must not build your hopes upon that, Fred. It is more from the feeling that nothing should be untried, than from the expectation that he can be of use."

"Then there is no hope?" said Fred, with a strange quietness.

"Man can do nothing," answered his uncle. "You know how the case stands; the complaint cannot be

reached, and there is scarcely a probability of its becoming inactive. It may be an affair of days or weeks, or she may yet rally, and be spared to us for some time longer."

"If I could but think so!" said Fred. "But I cannot. Her face will not let me hope."

"If ever a ray from heaven shone out upon a departing saint," said Uncle Geoffrey—but he could not finish the sentence, and turning away, walked to the window.

"And you must go!" said Fred, when he came back to his side again.

"I must," said Uncle Geoffrey. "Nothing but the most absolute necessity could make me leave you now. I scarcely could feel myself an honest man if I was not in my place to-morrow. I shall be here again on Thursday, at latest, and bring Beatrice. Your mother thinks she may be a comfort to Henrietta."

"Henrietta knows all this?" asked Fred.

"As far as she will bear to believe it," said his uncle. "We cannot grudge her unconsciousness, but I am afraid it will be worse for her in the end. You must nerve yourself, Fred, to support her. Now, good-bye, and may God bless and strengthen you in your trial!"

Fred was left alone again to the agony of the bitterest thoughts he had ever known. All his designs of devoting himself to her at an end! Her whom he loved with such an intensity of enthusiastic admiration and reverence—the gentlest, the most affectionate, the most beautiful being he knew! Who would ever care for him as she did?"

To whom would it matter now whether he was in danger or in safety? whether he distinguished himself or not? And how thoughtlessly had he trifled with her comfort, for the mere pleasure of a moment, and even fancied himself justified in doing so! Even her present illness, had it not probably been brought on by her anxiety and attendance on him? and it was his own willful disobedience to which all might be traced. It was no wonder that, passing from one such miserable thought to another, his bodily weakness was considerably increased, and he remained very languid and unwell; so much so that had Philip Carey ever presumed to question anything Mr. Geoffrey Langford thought fit to do, he would have pronounced yesterday's visit a most imprudent measure. In the afternoon, as Fred was lying on the sofa, he heard a foot on the stairs and going along the passage.

"Who is that?" said he; "the new doctor already? It is a strange step."

"Oh! Fred, don't be the fairy Fine Ear, as you used to be when you were at the worst," said Henrietta.

"But do you know who it is?" said he.

"It is Mr. Franklin," said Henrietta. "You know mamma has only been once at church since your accident, and then there was no Holy Communion. So you must not fancy she is worse, Fred."

"I wished we were confirmed," said Fred, sighing, and presently adding, "My prayer-book, if you please, Henrietta."

"You will only make your head worse, with trying to read the small print," she said; "I will read anything you want to you."

He chose nevertheless to have it himself, and when he next spoke, it was to say, "I wish, when Mr. Franklin leaves her, you would ask him to come to me."

Henrietta did not like the proposal at all, and said all she could against it; but Fred persisted, and made her at last undertake to ask Aunt Geoffrey's consent. Even then she would have done her best to miss the opportunity; but Fred heard the first sounds, and she was obliged to fetch Mr. Franklin. The conference was not long, and she found no reason to regret that it had taken place; for Fred did not seem so much oppressed and weighed down when she again returned to him.

The physician who had been sent for arrived. He had seen Mrs. Frederick Langford some years before, and well understood her case, and his opinion was now exactly what Fred had been prepared by his uncle to expect. It was impossible to conjecture how long she might yet survive; another attack might come at any moment, and be the last. It might be deferred for weeks or months, or even now it was possible that she might rally, and return to her usual state of health.

It was on this possibility, or as she chose to hear the word, probability, that Henrietta fixed her whole mind. The rest was to her as if unsaid; she would not hear nor believe it, and shunned anything that brought the least impression of the kind. The only occasion when she would avow her fears even to herself, was when she knelt in prayer; and then how wild and unsubmissive were her petitions! How imbittered and wretched she would feel at her own powerlessness! Then the next minute she would drive off her fears as by force; call up a vision of a brightly smiling future; think, speak, and act, as if hiding her eyes would prevent the approach of the enemy she dreaded.

Her grandmamma was as determined as herself to hope; and her grandpapa, though fully alive to the real state of the case, could not bear to sadden her before the time, and let her talk on and build schemes for the future, till he himself almost caught a glance of her hopes, and his deep

sigh was the only warning she received from him. Fred, too weak for much argument, and not unwilling to rejoice now and then in an illusion, was easily silenced, and Aunt Geoffrey had no time for any one but the patient. Her whole thought, almost her whole being, was devoted to "Mary," the friend, the sister of her childhood, whom she now attended upon with something of the reverent devotedness with which an angel might be watched and served, were it to make a brief sojourn upon earth; feeling it a privilege each day that she was still permitted to attend her, and watching for each passing word and expression as a treasure to be dwelt on in many a subsequent year.

It could not be thus with Henrietta, bent on seeing no illness, on marking no traces of danger, shutting her eyes to all the tokens that her mother was not to be bound down to earth forever. She found her always cheerful, ready to take interest in all that pleased her, and still with the playfulness which never failed to light up all that approached her. A flower, what pleasure it gave her! and how sweet her smile would be!

It was on the evening of the day after the physician's visit, that Henrietta came in talking, with the purpose of, as she fancied, cheering her mother's spirits, of some double lilac primroses which Mrs. Langford had promised her for the garden at the Pleasance. Her mamma smelled the flowers, admired them, and smiled as she said, "Your papa planted a root of those in my little garden the first summer I was here."

"Then I am sure you will like to have them at the Pleasance, mamma?"

"My dear child"—she paused, while Henrietta started, and gazed upon her, frightened at the manner—"you must not build upon our favorite old plan; you must prepare——"

"Oh but, mamma, you are better! You are much better than two days ago; and these clear days do you so much good; and it is all so bright."

"Thanks to Him who has made it bright!" said her mother, taking her hand. "But I fear, my own dearest, that it will seem far otherwise to you. I want you to make up your mind——"

Henrietta broke vehemently upon the feeble accents. "Mamma! mamma! you must not speak so! It is the worst thing people can possibly do to think despondingly of themselves. Aunt Geoffrey, do tell her so!"

"Despondingly! my child; you little know what the thought is to me!"

The words were almost whispered, and Henrietta scarcely marked them.

"No, no you must not! It is too cruel to me—I can't bear it!" she cried; the tears in her eyes, and a violence of agitation about her, which her mother, feeble as she was, could not attempt to contend with. She rested her head on her cushions, and silently and mournfully followed with her eyes the hasty, trembling movements of her daughter, who continued to arrange the things on the table, and make desperate attempts to regain her composure; but completely failing, caught up her bonnet, and hurried out of the room.

"Poor dear child," said Mrs. Frederick Langford, "I wish she was more prepared. Beatrice, the comforting her is the dearest and saddest task I leave you. Fred, poor fellow, is prepared, and will bear up like a man; but it will come fearfully upon her. And Henrietta and I have been more like sisters than mother and daughter. If she would only bear to hear me—but no, if I were to be overcome while speaking to her, it might give her pain in the recollection. Beatrice, you must tell her all I would say."

"If I could."

"You must tell her, Beatrice, that I was as undisciplined as she is now. Tell her how I have come to rejoice in the great affliction of my life; how little I knew how to bear it when Frederick was taken from me and his children, in the prime of his health and strength. You remember how crushed to the ground I was, and how it was said that my life was saved chiefly by the calmness that came with the full belief that I was dying. And O! how my spirit rebelled when I found myself recovering! Do you remember the first day I went to church to return thanks?"

"It was after we were gone home."

"Ah! yes. I had put it off longer than I ought, because I felt so utterly unable to join in the service. The sickness of heart that came with those verses of thanksgiving! All I could do was to pray to be forgiven for not being able to follow them. Now I can own with all my heart the mercy that would not grant my blind wish for death. My treasure was indeed in heaven, but O! it was not the treasure that was meant. I was forgetting my mother, and so selfish and untamed was I, that I was almost forgetting my poor babies! Yes, tell her this, Beatrice, and tell her that, if duties and happiness sprung up all around me, forlorn and desolate as I thought myself, so much the more will they for her; and 'at evening time there shall be light.' Tell her that I look to her for guiding and influencing Fred. She must never let a week pass without writing to him, and she must have the honored office of waiting on the old

age of her grandfather and grandmother. I think she will be a comfort to them, do not you? They are fond of her, and she seems to suit them."

"Yes, I have little doubt that she will be everything to them. I have especially noticed her ways with Mrs. Langford, they are so exactly what I have tried to teach Beatrice."

"Dear little Busy Bee! I am glad she is coming; but in case I should not see her, give her her godmother's love, and tell her that she and Henrietta must be what their mammas have been to each other; and that I trust that after thirty-five years' friendship, they will still have as much comfort in one another as I have in you, my own dear Beatrice. I have written her name in one of these books," she added, after a short interval, touching some which were always close to her. "And Beatrice, one thing more I had to say," she proceeded, taking up a Bible, and finding out a place in it. "Geoffrey has always been a happy, prosperous man, as he well deserves; but if ever trouble should come to him in his turn, then show him this." She pointed out the verse, "Be as a father to the fatherless, and instead of a husband unto their mother; so shalt thou be as the son of the Most High, and He shall love thee more than thy mother doth." "Show him that, and tell him it is his sister Mary's last blessing."

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON Thursday morning Henrietta began to awake from her sound night's rest. Was it a dream that she saw a head between her and the window? She thought it was, and turned to sleep again; but at her movement the head turned, the figure advanced, and Mrs. Geoffrey Langford stood over her.

Henrietta opened her eyes, and gazed upon her without saying a word for some moments; then, as her senses awakened, she half sprung up: "How is mamma? Does she want me? Why?" Her aunt made an effort to speak, but it seemed beyond her power.

"Oh, aunt, aunt!" cried she, "what is the matter? What has happened? Speak to me!"

"Henrietta," said her aunt, in a low, calm, but hoarse tone, "she bade you bear up for your brother's sake."

"But — but——" said Henrietta, breathlessly, "and she——"

"My dear child, she is at rest."

Henrietta laid her head back, as if completely stunned, and unable to realize what she had heard.

"Tell me," she said, after a few moments.

Her aunt knelt by her and steadily, without a tear, began to speak. "It was at half-past twelve; she had been asleep some little time very quietly. I was just going to lie down on the sofa, when I thought her face looked different, and stood watching. She woke, said she felt oppressed, and asked me to raise her pillows. While she was leaning against my arm, there was a spasm, a shiver, and she was gone! Yes, we must only think of her as in perfect peace!"

Henrietta lay motionless for some moments, then at last broke out with a sort of anger, "Oh, why did you not call me?"

"There was not one instant, my dear, and I could not ring, for fear of disturbing Fred. I could not call any one till it was too late."

"Oh, why was I not there? I would—I would—she must have heard me. I would not have let her go. Oh, mamma!" cried Henrietta, almost unconscious of what she said, and bursting into a transport of ungovernable grief, sobbing violently, and uttering wild, incoherent exclamations. Her aunt tried in vain to soothe her by kind words, but all she said seemed only to add impulse to the torrent; and at last she found herself obliged to wait till the violence of the passion had in some degree exhausted itself; and young, strong, and undisciplined as poor Henrietta was, this was not quickly. At last, however, the sobs grew less loud, and the exclamations less vehement. Aunt Geoffrey thought she could be heard, leaned down over her, kissed her, and said, "Now we must pray that we may fulfill her last desire; bear it patiently, and try to help your brother."

"Fred! oh, poor Fred!" and she seemed on the point of another burst of lamentation; but her aunt went on speaking: "I must go to him; he has yet to hear it, and you had better come to him as soon as you are dressed."

"Oh, aunt, I could not bear to see him. It will kill him, I know it will! Oh, no, no, I cannot, cannot see Fred! Oh, mamma, mamma!"

A fresh fit of weeping succeeded, and Mrs. Geoffrey Langford, herself feeling most deeply, was in great doubt and perplexity; she did not like to leave Henrietta in this condition, and yet there was an absolute necessity that she should go to poor Fred, before any chance accident or mistake should reveal the truth.

"I must leave you, my dear," said she, at last. "Think how your dear mother bowed down her head to His will. Pray to your FATHER in heaven, who alone can comfort you. I must go to your brother, and when I return, I hope you will be more composed."

The pain of witnessing the passionate sorrow of Henrietta was no good preparation for carrying the same tidings to one whose bodily weakness made it to be feared that he might suffer even more; but Mrs. Geoffrey Langford feared to lose her composure by stopping to reflect, and hastened down from Henrietta's room with a hurried step.

She knocked at Fred's door, and was answered by his voice. As she entered he looked at her with anxious eyes, and before she could speak, said:

"I know what you are come to tell me."

"Yes, Fred," said she; "but how?"

"I was sure of it," said Fred. "I knew I should never see her again; and there were sounds this morning. Did not I hear poor Henrietta crying?"

"She has been crying very much," said his aunt.

"Ah! she would never believe it," said Fred. "But after last Sunday—oh, no one could look at that face, and think she was to stay here any longer!"

"We could not wish it for her sake," said his aunt, for the first time feeling almost overcome.

"Let me hear how it was," said Frederick, after a pause.

His aunt repeated what she had before told Henrietta, and he then asked quickly: "What did you do? I did not hear you ring."

"No, that was what I was afraid of. I was going to call some one when I met grandpapa, who was just going up. He came with me, and—and was very kind—then he sent me to lie down; but I could not sleep, and went to wait for Henrietta's waking."

Frederick gave a long, deep, heavy sigh, and said: "Poor Henrietta! Is she very much overcome?"

"So much, that I hardly know how to leave her!"

"Don't stay with me, then, Aunt Geoffrey. It is very kind in you, but I don't think anything is much good to me." He hid his face as he spoke thus, in a tone of the deepest dejection.

"Nothing but prayer, my dear Fred," said she, gently. "Then I will go to your sister again."

"Thank you." And she had reached the door when he asked: "When does Uncle Geoffrey come?"

"By the four o'clock train," she answered, and moved on.

Frederick hid his head under the clothes, and gave way to a burst of agony, which, silent as it was, was even more intense than his sister's. O! the blank that life seemed without her look, her voice, her tone! the frightful certainty that he should never see her more! Then it would

for a moment seem utterly incredible that she should thus have passed away; but then returned the conviction, and he felt as if he could not even exist under it. But this excessive oppression and consciousness of misery seemed chiefly to come upon him when alone. In the presence of another person he could talk in the same quiet, matter-of-fact way in which he had already done to his aunt; and the blow itself, sudden as it was, did not affect his health as the first anticipation of it had done. With Henrietta things were quite otherwise. When alone, she was quiet, in a sort of stupor, in which she scarcely even thought; but the entrance of any person into her room threw her into a fresh paroxysm of grief, ever increasing in vehemence; then she was quieted a little, and was left to herself, but she could not, or would not, turn where alone comfort could be found, and repelled, almost as if it was an insult to her affection, any entreaty that she would even try to be comforted. Above all, in the perverseness of her undisciplined affliction, she persisted in refusing to see her brother. She should "do him harm," she said. "No, it was utterly impossible for her to control herself so as not to do him harm." And thereupon her sobs and tears redoubled. She would not touch a morsel of food, she would not consent to leave her bed when asked to do so, though ten minutes after, in the restlessness of her misery, she was found walking up and down her room in her dressing-gown.

Never had Mrs. Geoffrey Langford known a more trying day. Old Mr. Langford, who had loved "Mary" like his own child, did indeed bear up under the affliction with all his own noble spirit of Christian submission; but, excepting by his sympathy, he could be of little assistance to her in the many painful offices which fell to her share. Mrs. Langford walked about the house, active as ever; now sitting down in her chair, and bursting into a flood of tears for "poor Mary," or "dear Frederick," all the sorrow for whose loss seemed renewed; then rising vigorously, saying, "Well, it is His will; it is all for the best!" and hastening away to see how Henrietta and Fred were, to make some arrangement about mourning, or to get Geoffrey's room ready for him. And in all these occupations she wanted Beatrice to consult or to sympathize, or to promise that Geoffrey would like and approve what she did. In the course of the morning Mr. and Mrs. Roger Langford came from Sutton Leigh, and the latter, by taking the charge of, talking to, and assisting Mrs. Langford, greatly relieved her sister-in-law. Still there were the two young mourners. Henrietta was completely unmanageable, only resting now and then to break forth with more violence;

and her sorrow far too selfish and unsubmissive to be soothed either by the thought of Him who sent it, or of the peace and rest to which that beloved one was gone; and as once the anxiety for her brother had swallowed up all care for her mother, so now grief for her mother absorbed every consideration for Frederick; so that it was useless to attempt to persuade her to make any exertion for his sake. Nothing seemed in any degree to tranquilize her except Aunt Geoffrey's reading to her; and then it was only that she was lulled by the sound of the voice, not that the sense reached her mind. But then, how go on reading to her all day, when poor Fred was left in his lonely room, to bear his own share of sorrow in solitude? For though Mr. and Mrs. Langford, and Uncle and Aunt Roger, made him many brief, kind visits, they all of them had either too much on their hands, or were unfitted by disposition to be the companions he wanted. It was only Aunt Geoffrey who could come and sit by him, and tell him all those precious sayings of his mother in her last days, which in her subdued, low voice, renewed that idea of perfect peace and repose which came with the image of his mother, and seemed to still the otherwise overpowering thought that she was gone. But in the midst the door would open, and grandmamma would come in, looking much distressed, with some such request as this—"Beatrice, if Fred can spare you, would you just go up to poor Henrietta? I thought she was better, and that it was as well to do it at once; so I went to ask her for one of her dresses, to send for a pattern for her mourning, and that has set her off crying to such a degree, that Elizabeth and I can do nothing with her. I wish Geoffrey was come!"

Nothing was expressed so often through the day as this wish, and no one wished more earnestly than his wife, though, perhaps, she was the only person who did not say so a dozen times. There was something cheering in hearing that his brother had actually set off to meet him at Allonfield; and at length Fred's sharpened ears caught the sound of the carriage wheels, and he was come. It seemed as if he was considered by all as their own exclusive property. His mother had one of her quick, sudden bursts of lamentation as soon as she saw him; his brother, as usual, wanted to talk to him; Fred was above all eager for him; and it was only his father who seemed even to recollect that his wife might want him more than all. And so she did. Her feelings were very strong and impetuous by nature, and the loss was one of the greatest she could have sustained. Nothing save her husband and child was so near to her heart as her sister; and, worn out as she was by long attendance, sleepless nights, and this trying

day, when all seemed to rest upon her, she now completely gave way, and was no sooner alone with her husband and daughter, than her long repressed feelings relieved themselves in a flood of tears, which, though silent, were completely beyond her own control. Now that he was come, she could, and indeed must, give way; and the more she attempted to tell him of the peacefulness of her own dear Mary, the more her tears would stream forth. He saw how it was, and would not let her either reproach herself for her weakness, or attempt any longer to exert herself; but made her lie down on her bed, and told her that he and Queen Bee could manage very well.

Queen Bee stood there pale, still, and bewildered looking. She had scarcely spoken since she heard of her aunt's death; and new as affliction was to her sunny life, scarce knew where she was, or whether this was her own dear Knight Sutton; and even her mother's grief seemed to her almost more like a dream.

"Ah, yes," said Mrs. Geoffrey Langford, as soon as her daughter had been named, "I ought to have sent you to Henrietta before."

"Very well," said Beatrice, though her heart sunk within her as she thought of her last attempt at consoling Henrietta.

"Go straight up to her," continued her mother; "don't wait to let her think whether she will see you or not. I only wish poor Fred could do the same."

"If I could but do her any good," sighed Beatrice, as she opened the door, and hastened up-stairs. She knocked, and entered without waiting for an answer. Henrietta lifted up her head, came forward with a little cry, threw herself into her arms, and wept bitterly. Mournful as all around was, there was a bright ray of comfort in Queen Bee's heart when she was thus hailed as a friend and comforter. She only wished and longed to know what might best serve to console her poor Henrietta; but all that occurred to her was to embrace and fondle her very affectionately, and call her by the most caressing names. This was all that Henrietta was as yet fit to bear; and after a time, growing quieter, she poured out to her cousin all her grief, without fear of blame for its violence. Beatrice was sometimes indeed startled by the want of all idea of resignation; but she could not believe that any one could feel otherwise—least of all Henrietta, who had lost her only parent, and that parent Aunt Mary. Neither did she feel herself good enough to talk seriously to Henrietta; she considered herself as only sent to sit with her, so she did not make any attempt to preach the resignation which was so much wanted; and Henrietta, who had

all day been hearing of it, and rebelling against it, was almost grateful to her. So Henrietta talked and talked, the same repeated lamentation, the same dreary views of the future coming over and over again; and Beatrice's only answer was to agree with all her heart to all that was said of her own dear Aunt Mary, and to assure Henrietta of the fervent love that was still left for her in so many hearts on earth.

The hours passed on; Beatrice was called away, and Henrietta was inclined to be fretful at her leaving her; but she presently returned, and the same discourse was renewed, until at last Beatrice began to read to her, and thus did much to soothe her spirits, persuaded her to take a tolerable meal at tea-time, bathed her eyelids that were blistered with tears, put her to bed, and finally read her to sleep. Then, as she crept quietly down to inquire after her mamma, and wish the others in the drawing-room good-night, she reflected whether she had done what she ought for her cousin.

"I have not put a single right or really consoling thought into her head," she said to herself, "for as to the reading, she did not attend to that. But after all I could not have done it. I must be better myself before I try to improve other people; and it is not what I deserve to be allowed to be any comfort at all."

Thanks partly to Beatrice's possessing no rightful authority over Henrietta, partly to the old habit of relying on her, she contrived to make her get up and dress herself at the usual time next morning. But nothing would prevail on her to go down-stairs. She said she could not endure to pass "that door," where ever before the fondest welcome awaited her; and as to seeing her brother, that having been deferred yesterday, seemed to-day doubly dreadful. The worst of this piece of perverseness—for it really deserved no better name—was that it began to vex Fred.

"But that I know how to depend upon you, Uncle Geoffrey," said he, "I should really think she must be ill. I never knew anything so strange."

Uncle Geoffrey resolved to put an end to it, if possible; and soon after leaving Fred's room he knocked at his niece's door. She was sitting by the fire with a book in her hand, but not reading.

"Good-morning, my dear," said he, taking her languid hand. "I bring you a message from Fred—that he hopes you are soon coming down to him."

She turned away her head. "Poor, dear Fred!" said she; "but it is quite impossible. I cannot bear it as he does; I should only overset him and do him harm."

"And why cannot you bear it as he does?" asked her uncle, gravely. "You do not think his affection for her was less than yours? and you have all the advantages of health and strength."

"O, no one can feel as I do!" cried Henrietta, with one of her passionate outbreaks. "O, how I loved her!"

"Fred did not love her less," proceeded her uncle. "And why will you leave him in sorrow and in weakness to doubt the sister's love that should be his chief stay?"

"He does not doubt it," sobbed Henrietta. "He knows me better."

"Nay, Henrietta, what reason has he to trust to that affection which is not strong enough to overcome the dread of a few moments' painful emotion?"

"O, but it is not that only! I shall feel it all so much more out of this room, where she has never been; but to see the rest of the house—to go past her door! O, uncle, I have not the strength for it."

"No, your affection for him is not strong enough."

Henrietta's pale cheeks flushed, and her tears were angry. "You do not know me, Uncle Geoffrey," said she proudly, and then she almost choked with weeping at unkindness where she most expected kindness.

"I know thus much of you, Henrietta. You have been nursing up your grief, and encouraging yourself in murmuring and repining, in a manner which you will one day see to have been sinful; you are obstinate in making yourself useless."

Henrietta, little used to blame, was roused to defend herself with the first weapon she could. "Aunt Geoffrey is just as much knocked up as I am," said she.

If ever Uncle Geoffrey was made positively angry, he was so now, though if he had not thought it good that Henrietta should be roused, he would have repressed even such demonstrations as he made.

"Henrietta, this is too bad! Has she been weakly yielding?—has she been shutting herself up in her room, and keeping aloof from those who most need her, lest she should pain her own feelings? Have not you rather been perplexing and distressing, and harassing her with your willful selfishness, refusing to do the least thing to assist her in the care of your own brother, after she has been wearing herself out in watching over your mother? And now, when her strength and spirits are exhausted by the exertions she has made for you and yours, and I have been obliged to insist on her resting, you fancy her example an excuse for you! Is this the way your mother would have acted? I see arguing with you does you no good: I have no more to say."

He got up, opened the door, and went out. Henrietta, dismayed at the accusation, but too well founded on her words, had but one thought, that he should not deem her regardless of his kindness. "Uncle Geoffrey!" she cried. "O, uncle——" but he was gone; and forgetting everything else, she flew after him down the stairs, and before she recollected anything else, she found herself standing in the hall, saying: "Oh, uncle, do not think I meant that!"

At that moment her grandpapa came out of the drawing-room.

"Henrietta!" he said, "I am glad to see you downstairs."

Henrietta hastily returned his kiss, and looked somewhat confused; then laying her hand entreatingly on her uncle's arm, said:

"Only say you are not angry with me."

"No, no, Henrietta, not if you will act like a rational person," said he, with something of a smile, which she could not help returning in her surprise at finding herself down-stairs after all.

"And you do not imagine me ungrateful?"

"Not when you are in your right senses."

"Ungrateful!" exclaimed Mr. Langford. "What is he accusing you of, Henrietta? What is the meaning of all this?"

"Nothing," said Uncle Geoffrey, "but that Henrietta and I have both been somewhat angry with each other, but we have made it up now, have we not, Henrietta?"

It was wonderful how much good the very air of the hall was doing Henrietta, and how fast it was restoring her energy and power of turning her mind to other things. She answered a few remarks of grandpapa's with very tolerable cheerfulness, and even when the hall-door opened, and admitted Uncle and Aunt Roger, she did not run away, but stayed to receive their greetings before turning to ascend the stairs.

"You are not going to shut yourself up in your own room again?" said grandpapa.

"No, I was only going to Fred," said she, growing as desirous of seeing him as she had before been averse to it.

"Suppose," said Uncle Geoffrey, "that you were to take a turn or two round the garden first. There is Queen Bee, she will go out with you, and you will bring Fred in a fresher face."

"I will fetch your bonnet," said Queen Bee, who was standing at the top of the stairs, wisely refraining from expressing her astonishment at seeing her cousin in the hall.

And before Henrietta had time to object, the bonnet was on her head, a shawl thrown round her, Beatrice had drawn her arm within hers, and had opened the sashed door into the garden.

It was a regular April day, with all the brilliancy and clearness of the sunshine that comes between showers, the white clouds hung in huge soft masses on the blue sky, the leaves of the evergreens were glistening with drops of rain, the birds sung sweetly in the shrubs around. Henrietta's burning eyes felt refreshed, and though she sighed heavily, she could not help admiring, but Beatrice was surprised that the first thing she began to say was an earnest inquiry after Aunt Geoffrey, and a warm expression of gratitude toward her.

Then the conversation died away again, and they completed their two turns in silence; but Henrietta's heart began to fail her when she thought of going in without having *her* to greet. She lingered, and could hardly resolve to go, but at length she entered, walked up the stairs, gave her shawl and bonnet to Beatrice, and tapped at Fred's door.

"Is that you?" was his eager answer, and as she entered he came forward to meet her. "Poor Henrietta!" was all he said, as she put her arm round his neck and kissed him, and then leaning on her, he returned to his sofa, made her sit by him, and showed all sorts of kind solicitude for her comfort. She had cried so much that she felt as if she could cry no longer, but she reproached herself excessively for having left him to himself so long, when all he wanted was to comfort her; and she tried to make some apology.

"I am sorry I did not come sooner, Fred."

"O, it is of no use to talk about it," said Fred, playing with her long curls as she sat on a footstool close to him, just as she used to do in times long gone by. "You are come now, and that is all I want. Have you been out? I thought I heard the garden door just before you come in."

"Yes, I took two turns with Queen Bee. How bright and sunny it is. And how are you this morning, Freddy?"

"O, pretty well, I think," said he, sighing, as if he cared little about the matter. "I wanted to show you this, Henrietta." And he took up a book where he had marked a passage for her. She saw several paper marks in some other books, and perceived with shame that he had been reading yesterday, and choosing out what might comfort her, his selfish sister, as she could not help feeling herself.

And here was the first great point gained, though there was still much for Henrietta to learn. It was the first time she had ever been conscious of her own selfishness, or per-

haps more justly, of her proneness to make all give way to her own feeling of the moment.

CHAPTER XIX.

THERE was some question as to who should attend the funeral. Henrietta shuddered and trembled all over as if it was a cruelty to mention it before her; but Frederick was very desirous that she should be there, partly from a sort of feeling that she would represent himself, and partly from a strong conviction that it would be good for her. She was willing to do anything or everything for him, to make up for her day's neglect; and she consented, though with many tears, and was glad that at least Fred seemed satisfied. and her uncle looked pleased with her.

Aunt Geoffrey undertook to stay with Fred, and Henrietta, who clung much to Beatrice, felt relieved by the thought of her support in such an hour of trial. She remembered the day when, with a kind of agreeable emotion, she had figured to herself her father's funeral, little thinking of the reality that so soon awaited her, so much worse, as she thought, than what any of them could even then have felt; and it seemed to her perfectly impossible that she should ever have power to go through with it.

It was much, however, that she should have agreed to what in the prospect gave her so much pain; and, perhaps, for that very reason, she found the reality less overwhelming than she had dreaded. Seeing nothing, observing nothing, hardly conscious of anything, she walked along, wrapped in one absorbing sense of wretchedness; and the first words that "broke the stillness of that hour," healing as they were, seemed but to add certainty to that one thought that "she was gone." But while the Psalms and the Lessons were read, the first heavy oppression of grief seemed in some degree to grow lighter. She could listen, and the words reached her mind; a degree of thankfulness arose to Him who had wiped away the tears from her mother's eyes, and by whom the sting of death had been taken away. Yes; she had waited in faith, in patience, in meek submission, until now her long widowhood was over; and what better for her could those who most loved her desire, than that she should safely sleep in the chancel of the church of her childhood, close to him whom she had so loved and so mourned, until the time when both should once more awaken—the corruptible should put on incorruption, the mortal should put on immortality, and death be swallowed up in victory.

Something of this was what Henrietta began to feel; and

though the tears flowed fast, they were not the bitter drops of personal sorrow. She was enabled to bear, without the agony she had expected, the standing round the grave in the chancel; nor did her heart swell rebelliously against the expression that it was "in great mercy that the soul of this our dear sister" was taken, even though she shrunk and shivered at the sound of the earth cast in, which would seem to close up from her forever the most loved and loving creature that she would ever know. No, not forever—might she too but keep her part in Him who is the Resurrection and the Life—might she be found acceptable in His sight, and receive the blessing to be pronounced to all that love and fear Him.

It was over; they all stood round for a few minutes. At last Mr. Langford moved; Henrietta was also obliged to turn away, but before doing so, she raised her eyes to her father's name, to take leave of him, as it were, as she always did before going out of church. She met her uncle Geoffrey's eye as she did so, and took his arm; and as soon as she was out of the church, she said, almost in a whisper:

"Uncle, I don't wish for him now."

He pressed her arm, and looked most kindly at her; but he did not speak, for he could hardly command his voice; and he saw, too, that she might safely be trusted to the influences of that only true consolation which was coming upon her.

They came home—to the home that looked as if it would fain be once more cheerful, with the front window blinds drawn up again, and the solemn stillness no longer observed. Henrietta hastened up to her own room, for she could not bear to show herself to her brother in her long crape veil. She threw her bonnet off, knelt down for a few minutes, but rose on hearing the approach of Beatrice, who still shared the same room. Beatrice came in, and looked at her for a few moments, as if doubtful how to address her; but at last she put her hand on her shoulder, and looking earnestly in her face repeated:

"Then cheerly to your work again,
With hearts new braced and set,
To run untir'd love's blessed race,
As meet for those who, face to face,
Over the grave their LORD have met."

"Yes, Queenie," said Henrietta, giving a long sigh, "it is a very different world to me now; but I do mean to try. And first, dear Bee, you must let me thank you for having been very kind to me this long time past, though I am afraid I showed little thankfulness."

She kissed her affectionately, and the tears almost choked Beatrice.

"Me! me, of all people," said she. "Oh, Henrietta!"

"We must talk of it all another time," said Henrietta; "but now it will not do to stay away from Fred any longer. Don't think this like the days when I used to run away from you in the winter, Bee—that time when I would not stop and talk about the verses on the holly."

While she spoke, there was something of the "new bracing" visible in every movement, as she set her dress to rights, and arranged her curls, which of late she had been used to allow to hang in a deplorable way, that showed how little vigor or inclination to bear up there was about her whole frame.

"O no, do not stay with me," said Queen Bee, "I am going——" to mamma, she would have said, but she hardly knew how to use the word when speaking to Henrietta.

"Yes," said Henrietta, understanding her. "And tell her, Bee—for I am sure I shall never be able to say it to her—all about our thanks, and how sorry I am that I cared so little about her or her comfort."

"If I had only believed, instead of blinding myself so willfully!" she almost whispered to herself with a deep sigh; but being now ready, she ran down-stairs, and entered her brother's room. His countenance bore traces of weeping, but he was still calm; and as she came in he looked anxiously at her. She spoke quietly as she sat down by him, put her hand into his, and said, "Thank you, dear Fred, for making me go."

"I was quite sure you would be glad when it was over," said Fred. "I have been reading the service with Aunt Geoffrey, but that is a very different thing."

"It will all come to you when you go to church again," said Henrietta.

"How little I thought that New Year's Day——" said Fred.

"Ah! and how little we either of us thought last summer holidays!" said Henrietta. "If it was not for that, I could bear it all better; but it was my determination to come here that seems to have caused everything, and that is the thought I cannot bear."

"I was talking all that over with Uncle Geoffrey last night," said Fred, "and he especially warned us against reproaching ourselves with consequences. He said it was he who had helped my father to choose the horse that caused his death, and asked me if I thought he ought to blame himself for that. I said no; and he went on to tell me that he did not think we ought to take unhappiness to ourselves for what has happened now; that we ought to

think of the actions themselves, instead of the results. Now my skating that day was just as bad as my driving, except, to be sure, that I put nobody in danger but myself; it was just as much disobedience, and I ought to be just as sorry for it, though nothing came of it, except that I grew more willful."

"Yes," said Henrietta, "but I shall always feel as if everything had been caused by me. I am sure I shall never dare to wish anything again."

"It was just as much my wish as yours," said Fred.

"Ah! but you did not go on always trying to make her do what you pleased, and keeping her to it, and almost thinking it a thing of course, to make her give up her wishes to yours. That was what I was always doing, and now I can never make up for it!"

"Oh, yes," said Fred, "we can never feel otherwise than that. To know how she forgave us both, and how her wishes always turned to be the same as ours, if ours were not actually wrong; that is little comfort to remember now, but perhaps it will be in time. But don't you see, Henrietta, my dear, what Uncle Geoffrey means?—that if you did domineer over her, it was very wrong, and you may be sorry for that; but that you must not accuse yourself of doing all the mischief by bringing her here. He says he does not know whether it was not, after all, what was most for her comfort, it——"

"Oh, Freddy, to have you almost killed!"

"If the thoughts I have had lately will but stay with me when I am well again, I do not think my accident will be a matter of regret, Henrietta. Just consider, when I was so disobedient in these little things, and attending so little to her or to Uncle Geoffrey, how likely it was that I might have gone on to much worse at school and college."

"Never, never!" said Henrietta.

"Not now, I hope," said Fred; "but that was not what I meant to say. No one could say, Uncle Geoffrey told me, that the illness was brought on either by anxiety or over exertion. The complaint was of long standing, and must have made progress some time or other; and he said that he was convinced that, as she said to Aunt Geoffrey, she had rather have been here than anywhere else. She said she could only be sorry for grandpapa and grandmamma's sake, but that for herself it was great happiness to have been to Knight Sutton Church once more; and she was most thankful that she had come to die in my father's home, after seeing us well settled here, instead of leaving us to come to it as a strange place."

"How little we guessed it was for that!" said Henri-

etta. "Oh, what were we doing? But if it made her happy——"

"Just imagine what to-day would have been if we were at Rocksand," said Fred. "I, obliged to go back to school directly, and you, taking leave of everything there which would seem to you so full of her; and Uncle Geoffrey just bringing you here without any time to stay with you, and the place and people all strange. I am sure she who thought so much for you, must have rejoiced that you are at home here already."

"Home!" said Henrietta, "how determinedly we used to call it so! But, oh! that my wish should have turned out in such a manner! If it has been all overruled so as to be happiness to her, as I am sure it has, I cannot complain; but I think I shall never wish again, or care for my own way."

"The devices and desires of our own hearts!" said Fred.

"I don't think I shall ever have spirit enough to be willful for my own sake," proceeded Henrietta. "Nothing will ever be the same pleasure to me, as when she used to be my other self, and enjoy it all over again for me; so that it was all twofold!" Here she hid her face, and her tears streamed fast, but they were soft and calm; and when she saw that Fred also was much overcome, she recalled her energies in a minute.

"But, Fred, I may well be thankful that I have you, which is far more than I deserve; and as long as we do what she wished, we are still obeying her. I think at last I may get something of the right sort of feeling; for I am sure I see much better now what she and grandpapa used to mean when they talked about dear papa. And now do you like for me to read to you?"

* * * * * * *

Few words more require to be said of Frederick and Henrietta Langford. Knight Sutton Hall was, according to their mother's wish, their home; and there Henrietta had the consolation, during the advancing spring and summer, of watching her brother's recovery, which was very slow, but at the same time steady. Mrs. Geoffrey Langford stayed with her as long as he required much nursing; and Henrietta learned to look upon her, not as quite a mother, but at any rate as more than an aunt, far more than she had ever been to her before; and when at length she was obliged to return to Westminster, it was a great satisfaction to think how soon the vacation would bring them all back to Knight Sutton.

The holidays arrived, and with them Alexander, who, to his great disappointment, was obliged to give up all his generous hopes that Fred would be one of his competitors

for the prize, when he found him able indeed to be with the family, to walk short distances, and to resume many of his former habits; but still very easily tired, and his head in a condition to suffer severely from noise, excitement, or application. Perhaps this was no bad thing for their newly formed alliance, as Alex had numberless opportunities of developing his consideration and kindness, by silencing his brothers, assisting his cousin when tired, and again and again silently giving up some favorite scheme of amusement when Fred proved to be unequal to it. Even Henrietta herself almost learned to trust Fred to Alex's care, which was so much less irritating than her own; and how greatly the Queen Bee was improved is best shown, when it is related, that neither by word nor look did she once interrupt the harmony between them, or attempt to obtain the attention, of which, in fact, she always had as large a share as any reasonable person could desire.

How fond Fred learned to be of Alex will be easily understood, and the best requital of his kindness that he could devise, was an offer—a very adventurous one, as was thought by all who heard of it—to undertake little Willy's Latin, which being now far beyond Aunt Roger's knowledge, had been under Alex's care during the holidays. Willy was a very good pupil on the whole—better, it was said by most, then Alex himself had been—and very fond of Fred; but Latin grammar and Cæsar formed such a test as perhaps their alliance would scarcely have endured, if in an insensible manner Willy and his books had not gradually been made over to Henrietta, whose great usefulness and good nature in this respect quite made up, in grandmamma's eyes, for her very tolerable amount of acquirements in Latin and Greek.

By the time care for her brother's health had ceased to be Henrietta's grand object, and she was obliged once more to see him depart to pursue his education, a whole circle of pursuits and occupations had sprung up around her, and given her the happiness of feeling herself both useful and valued. Old Mr. Langford saw in her almost the Mary he had parted with when resumed in early girlhood by Mrs. Vivian; Mrs. Langford had a granddaughter, who would either be petted, sent on messages, or be civil to the Careys, as occasion served; Aunt Roger was really grateful to her, as well for the Latin and Greek she bestowed upon Willy and Charlie, as for the braided merino frocks or coats on which Bennet used to exercise her taste when Henrietta's wardrobe failed to afford her sufficient occupation. The boys all liked her, made a friend of her, and demonstrated it in various ways more or less uncouth; her manners gradually acquired the influence over them

which Queen Bee had only exerted over Alex and Willy; and when, saving Carey and Dick, they grew less awkward and bearish. without losing their honest, downright good humor and good nature, Uncle Geoffrey only did her justice in attributing the change to her unconscious power. Miss Henrietta was also the friend of the poor women, the teacher and guide of the school children, and in their eyes and imagination second to no one but Mr. Franklin. And withal she did not cease to be all that she had ever been to her brother—if not still more. His heart and soul were for her, and scarce a joy or sorrow but was shared between them. She was his home, his everything, and she well fulfilled her mother's parting trust, of being his truest friend and best beloved counselor.

Would that her own want of submission and resignation had not prevented her from hearing the dear accents in which that charge was conveyed? This was, perhaps, the most deeply felt sorrow that followed her through life; and even with the fair, peaceful image of her beloved mother, there was linked a painful memory of a long course of willfulness and domineering on her own part. But there was much to be dwelt on that spoke only of blessedness and love, and each day brought her nearer to her whom she had lost, so long as she was humbly striving to walk in the steps of Him who "came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him."

[THE END.]

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